

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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## OPINION METER

**This week's poll:**  
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SEDC proposal to  
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except those at  
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## INSIDE



### Tipping Point

Katrina not only pulverized the Gulf Coast in 2005, it knocked the bully pulpit out from under Bush.

NATION...Page 15



### Sojourners

In their darkest moment, a miracle happened. A stranger walked into their lives. And she would become their great champion and friend.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

## TO FEND OFF GOVT DEFICIT IN FY09

# Fitial slashes govt budget

Governor OKs 5.5 pct across-the-board budget cut

By AGNES E. DONATO  
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REPORTER

Faced with dwindling government revenues and the lack of an updated budget, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial announced yesterday a 5.5-percent budget cut against all agencies during the rest of the 2009



Fitial

fiscal year.

According to Fitial, the proportionate cut will help the government, which expects to collect \$156.7 million, to finish the fiscal year in the black.

In a special budget message to the Legislature, Fitial said the across-the-board reduction will go into effect tomorrow, Jan. 1, 2009, when the second fiscal quarter will begin. The message does not mention any exemptions for critical ser-

See FITIAL on Page 4

## EDITORIAL

### Bush's ocean protection decision

*Editor's Note: The following is a Los Angeles Times editorial that was originally published Dec. 30, 2008.*

Laura Bush does not have a halo, and, as far as we know, Dick Cheney doesn't wield a pitchfork. Yet it's hard not to see the two as the angel and the demon on President Bush's shoulders as he ponders whether to protect vast stretches of pristine ocean habitat in the remote Pacific.

For months, Bush has been consid-  
See BUSH'S on Page 4

## TOURISM INDUSTRY CLEANUP

A total of 180 participants turn out at sunrise on Saturday morning, Dec. 27, to join the annual Travel Industry Cleanup in Gapan, Saipan. The combined efforts of travel industry representatives and private citizens netted 750 pounds of debris.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



## Fernandez named chair of NMC's College Council

By KRISTI EATON  
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas College president Carmen Fernandez is the new chairperson of the College Council, although at yesterday's Board of Regents meeting some regents raised concerns about her chairing the organization because the Council ad-

vices the college president.

Both NMC regents Agnes McPhetres and Elaine Orilla questioned Fernandez's holding the position.

But Fernandez said it is common practice in many institutions and that the Council would still advise the NMC



Fernandez

president.

"So its still in line with the concept of shared governance," Fernandez said. "In a way its advantageous since the president is still part of the Council."

Also, she said, the visiting officials from the Western As-

sociation of Schools and Colleges' Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges recommended the move during their November visit.

The WASC officials were visiting the college to examine the college's progress in their effort to get off "show cause" accreditation status. Earlier this year WASC

See FERNANDEZ on Page 4

HANMI hosts Christmas party for the *man'amko*. PAGE 2  
Yana and Atalig in jail for nine months now. PAGE 5

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## Local

# HANMI hosts Christmas party for the man'amko

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.  
n\_rodriguez@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The general managers of various hotels on Saipan served food to the *man'amko* and later dined with them during an annual Christmas party held yesterday at the Hibiscus Room of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

Lynn Knight, newly re-elected board chairwoman of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, said the lunch buffet is an annual treat for the elderly, "a way of respect to them."

She said it is a time for the GMs and some of the hotel industry's executive officers to cheer the island's elderly in this holiday season.



It is also a part of HANMI's community projects. Knight pointed out that, despite the pres-

ent difficulties the islands are experiencing, the hotel industry is united when it comes to giving

back to the community.

"It has become a traditional part of our group, like the annual

HANMI chairwoman Lynn Knight, second from left, receives the plaque of appreciation from Office on Aging director Howard I. Macaranas during the Christmas party with the CNMI's senior citizens yesterday at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort and Spa. Joining them are Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman, Senior Citizen Advisory Council Secretary Terry Sorroza, *Man'amko* Queen Rosalia Sablan and King Felipe Santiago.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ

HANMI golf tournament, with the proceeds being for the benefit of the *man'amko* because they have become so special to us and we have been doing this for a long time," said Knight.

Office on Aging director Howard I. Macaranas and *man'amko* program coordinator Walter Manglona thanked the hotel managers for their generosity.

Macaranas, together with Teresita Sorroza, secretary of the Senior Citizen Advisory Council; *Man'amko* Queen Rosalia Sablan and *Man'amko* King Felipe Santiago, presented a plaque of appreciation to HANMI. Knight received the plaque on behalf of the hotel managers.

Macaranas said that HANMI's continued support and contribution to the senior citizens remind them how fortunate they are to have such good friends.

"We recognize you for all the years of commitment and support that you have given to our senior citizens. Your spirit for the holiday has brought us and our seniors more hope for a better holiday," Macaranas said.

## Lynn Knight is re-elected as HANMI chair

Century Hotel GM Lynn Knight has been re-elected as chairwoman of the board of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, of which she is also its president.

The election was done during HANMI's annual Christmas treat for the CNMI's senior citizens yesterday at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort and Spa.

Knight, who is also publisher of *Saipan Tribune*, will serve for another two-year term.

This would be her third term for the post and she has already served four years.

Aside from Knight, two other board members were elected to two-year terms: Hyatt Regency Saipan GM Nick Nishikawa and Fiesta Resort and Spa GM B.K. Park.

There are three other members of the board who still have a year left before their term ends. They are Saipan World Resort GM Hong Shul Shin, Aqua Resort Club GM Hiroki Sugie and Mike Johnson, Deloitte & Touche managing partner.

Knight said the board will meet soon to choose the officers for the other vacant positions—vice chairman, secretary and treasurer. (Nazario Rodriguez)

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## NOTICE

(December 31, 2008)

Pursuant to Subsection 5.2 of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's (NMHC) Revised Administrative Plan (2007), NMHC wants to respectfully inform the general public that it will **STOP** accepting applications for its Saipan-based Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program beginning on January 31, 2009 due to the following reason(s):

- 1) There are currently 658 active Saipan applicants on the HCV program's waiting list and no available vouchers.

Please be further advised that the Tinian and Rota-based Section 8 HCV Programs will continue with its application intake and shall not be affected by this Notice. Similarly, the Section 8 Multifamily programs for all three (3) islands will also remain open.

NMHC will notify the public as soon as it is ready to begin accepting applications for its Saipan-based Section 8 HCV Program.

Thank you and should have any questions, please feel free to contact Kimo Rosario, Program and Housing Division Manager, at NMHC's Main Office on Saipan.



**Department of Public Safety**

For more information  
call 664-9084/85





## DPS issues safety reminders for tonight's revelry

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety urged the public yesterday to follow safety measures when exploding firecrackers or lighting fireworks during tonight's New Year's Eve celebrations.

DPS Patrol Commander Sgt. Joe Saures told *Saipan Tribune* that children must have adult supervision when exploding firecrackers.

Saures said that parents and adults should see to it that children don't play with lighters and fire when popping firecrackers or lighting fireworks.

"They also must not aim [fireworks] at other peoples' residences or at highways where vehicles are traveling because that can cause accidents and fire," he said.

So far this year, the police have not received reports of any serious injuries related to firecrackers, unlike in the previous years when firecrackers were unregulated.

"I believe that this year it's been regulated and our guys are making sure they are enforcing the firecracker law right now. We have already a law about firecrackers," he said.

Saures said there are already regulations with respect to

the sale of firecrackers.

"There are certain volumes of gunpowder allowed in the firecrackers. Now it is regulated to a certain capacity where it doesn't really blow up and hurt people, unlike those in previous years," he explained.

"I think the laws against firecrackers are pretty much good now. Whatever they put in them are less explosive than what we had in previous years," Saures added.

On the issue of criminality during the holiday season, the DPS official said their Patrol Section has been intensifying community patrols in villages.

"We really are trying to do a lot of deterrence as far as within the villages are concerned because of a lot of theft cases, a lot of burglaries going on," he said.

During late night or early morning Christmas Masses, Saures said, patrol officers were focused on residential areas because people were in churches.

He reminded motorists that there will be checkpoints on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day to make sure that highways and streets are safe from drunk and drugged drivers.

Saures' message to the public? "I wish them a very happy New Year and make sure they are safe and watch out for each other out there."

## DPH: No firework injuries yet

By **KRISTI EATON**  
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REPORTER

So far this holiday season the Commonwealth Health Center has seen few injuries, according to Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez.

Although he is still waiting for the final reports, he said there were no firework related injuries over Christmas.

"But of course, the main concern is fireworks are mainly aligned with New Year's," he added. "I'm just very surprised we still have them around."

Public Law 15-127 was passed earlier this year banning the sale and use of fireworks in light of past incidents where children have been severely burned and lost eyesight or homes caught fire and were destroyed.

"The Legislature finds that the

fireworks/firecracker situation in the Commonwealth has become uncontrollable under current provisions of law and a broader prohibition is necessary in the interest of public health and safety for the promotion of a strong tourist industry," the law states.

The Secretary said the hospital would be keeping a close eye on possible injuries over the New Year. He urged everyone to be safe during the holiday.

Villagomez said the only tragic accident happening during the Christmas holiday was the electrocution of Mel Hal B. Ogarto Taitano, 33, on Friday. Taitano was electrocuted while picking breadfruit using a metal pipe that came in contact with a power line in Chalan Kanoa.

"It was really sad because he was getting breadfruit for his wife who was pregnant," Villagomez said.



Villagomez

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## Hafa Adai! Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

The *Saipan Tribune* will **NOT** be published on **Jan. 2, 2009**, to enable its employees to observe the holiday on Jan. 1. Your understanding in this matter is greatly appreciated.

*Have a safe and a happy New Year to all!*

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# CJPA approves grant for neighborhood watchers

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.  
n\_rodriguez@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Saipan's Neighborhood Watch Task Force recently got a boost in its efforts to deter crimes in the community when the Criminal Justice Planning Agency approved its grant request for \$3,500.

The sub-grant is under the Fiscal Year 2008 Justice Assistance Grant for the task force's pilot program.

CJPA executive director Jerome Ierome informed the group about the grant approval in a letter to task force chair Antonia M. Tudela on Dec. 3.

The task force is composed of various agencies that include the Saipan Mayor's Office, 10<sup>th</sup> Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, Marianas Visitors Authority, Department

of Public Safety and JROTC.

The pilot program aims to reduce the occurrence of crimes, improve preparedness in responding to suspicious activity, greater access to criminal activity information, getting to know one's neighbors, reducing the fear of crime and instead making one's neighborhood more livable, and allowing other issues of concern to be addressed.

To accomplish these tasks, the neighborhood watchers intend to build a partnership with the community.

The task force also intends to instill a greater sense of security while reducing the fear of crime and create a sense of community, "putting the neighbor back in the neighborhood."

As part of its pilot program, the task force has identified other duties and responsibilities,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Neighborhood Watch Task Force met on Dec. 18 at the Man'amko Center. Seated from left to right: Howard I. Macaranas, Antonia M. Tudela, Juan I. Tenorio, and Sgt. Vincente H. Sablan. Standing from left to right: William S. Torres, William Santos, Ramon B. Camacho, Felipe Q. Atalg, Alexandra Blas, James K. Lee, and Tony Benavente.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy birthday to Marion John R Sayas, who is celebrating his 4th birthday today, Dec. 31. Greetings come from Mom, Dad, Marchie, MJ and MK.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## ERRATUM

The caption for this picture, originally published on Dec. 30, 2008, incorrectly identified the float as that of San Vicente Elementary School. The float is actually that of the San Antonio Elementary School, and it won first place in the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas in the Marianas celebration held last Dec. 20. Our apologies.

including the need to undertake assessment, conduct studies and develop action plans and implementation strategies in developing a permanent neighborhood watch program in every precinct

on Saipan.

It will also distribute crime prevention and deterrence information to citizens within the neighborhood community.

It will also hold public meet-

ings with local enforcement agencies about crime in the community and the steps needed to take in preventing, curbing and solving suspicious and criminal activities.

The task force will also coordinate a special watch or escort volunteer program for senior citizens or other potential victims in the community and such other objectives.

## FITIAL

From Page 1

vices such as education, health care, and public safety.

The governor said he has already instructed Finance officials to implement the reduction and to "spread the concomitant effect of the allotment authority for the remaining three quarters of the fiscal year."

Fitial urged the Legislature to enact laws to help reduce current expenditures and to generate additional revenues.

"Measures imposing austerity Fridays, non-paid holidays, and a reduced employer contribution rate to the Northern Mari-

ana Islands Retirement Fund's defined benefit plan would provide much needed relief in terms of managing the meager local resources needed to fund critical public services," he said.

He also asked for full and flexible reprogramming power to all expenditure authorities. He said this would help affected agencies make decisions based on their respective priorities.

"I regret that we have to take the actions proposed in this special budget message," Fitial told Senate President Pete P. Reyes and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios. "I ask for your cooperation and that of your colleagues in addressing the critical needs of our community even

under the most difficult circumstances."

The budget message follows the governor's veto of the Legislature-passed appropriations bill for FY2009. Fitial pointed to an \$8.7-million drop in the Department of Finance's revenue projection in disapproving the budget plan. He noted two major sources of the revenue decline: the impending closure of three of the four remaining garment manufacturers on Saipan and Northwest Airlines' plan to stop the Osaka-Saipan route in March 2009.

This decreased revenue projection for FY2009 reflects the downward trend also seen in government collections last

fiscal year. Finance Secretary Eloy S. Inos has reported that the government earned \$4.5 million less than expected in FY2008. The declining income, compounded by \$13.6 million in overspending, caused the government to incur an \$18.1 million deficit last year.

The CNMI government also failed to enact a budget for FY2008. Because of that, the government went on "continuing resolution," spending at the prior year's level of \$160.1 million. However, the government collected only \$155.6 million, and spent \$173.7 million, according to Inos' preliminary report.

## FERNANDEZ

From Page 1

ordered NMC to provide reasons-or "show cause"-why the college's accreditation should not be terminated. WASC will make their decision in January.

The College Council adopted

the Institutional Excellence Guide last week, which is an organizational guide to NMC's shared governance, planning, assessment and budgeting. Among other things, the guide details the duties of the College Council, an organization that has been a regular part of NMC for some time.

"The College Council is the recognized shared governance structure for the College that serves as the primary advisory body to the President on issues related to the ongoing operations of the College," the guide states.

The Council, according to the guide, advises NMC's presi-

dent on matters such as policy and administrative review; management and allocation of resources; budgeting and allocation of resources; academic programs; and accreditation and self-study.

The group is made up of two students, six faculty, four staff and nine administrators.

## BUSH'S

From Page 1

ering the creation of two sweeping marine reserves, a move that would make him the most ocean-friendly president in history. Bush had already achieved distinction when, in 2006, he approved a 140,000-square-mile marine national monument in the northwestern Hawaiian

Islands. But the new plan would dwarf that, potentially protecting up to 900,000 square miles around the Mariana Islands and around a series of tiny, U.S.-controlled territories stretching from the Line Islands to the Rose Atoll in American Samoa.

Usually it takes congressional approval to designate national parks and monuments, but a controversial law passed in 1906 called the Antiquities Act allows

presidents to declare unlimited expanses of federal land off-limits to hunting, fishing, oil exploration, mining or other extractive uses. President Clinton designated more national monuments using this act than any other president, but Bush could potentially protect quite a bit more territory.

According to the *Washington Post*, the first lady supports the sanctuaries and has requested briefings on them from scientists

and White House aides, while Vice President Cheney opposes them. Backing up Cheney are the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, a federal agency that regulates fishing from Hawaii to Guam, and many political leaders in the Marianas, who complain that the designation would harm their economy. Yet the majority of residents of the Marianas seem to disagree with their leaders; polls and peti-

tions of the islands' 10,000 registered voters show strong support. Most likely, that's because they recognize that the rich marine life surrounding the islands is more valuable as a tourist attraction than as a fishing spot. Moreover, the fishery council has proved itself a poor steward of fish stocks, and seems unclear on the concept that sanctuaries don't just improve fish populations within the protected area, but in surrounding

areas as well.

Bush should designate these monuments, and impose the maximum allowable protections, because it's the right thing to do—enhancing biodiversity and helping to ward off the threats of overfishing and pollution to our oceans. But if that's not enough to convince him, he should consider that he doesn't have to sleep next to Cheney for the rest of his life.



# Yana and Atalig in jail for nine months now

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
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REPORTER

Lawyers Reynaldo O. Yana and Antonio M. Atalig have been in jail for nine months now since Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo ordered their incarceration for contempt of court in March.

Yana and Atalig spent Christmas Day at the Department of Corrections in Susupe and may also spend their New Year's Day in jail.

Govendo set the hearing for Jan. 5, 2009, at 9am for the court to hear the results of the two lawyers' efforts toward satisfying court orders that direct



Govendo

them to return more than a million dollars in attorney's fees to the Angel Malite estate.

The judge directed Yana and Atalig to deliver all materials they plan to present at the Jan. 5 hearing to the law offices of F. Matthew Smith, Stephen Nutting, and Victorino Torres no later than Jan. 2, 2009.

Smith, Nutting, and Torres represent the heir claimants in the Malite estate.

Yana and Atalig have been incarcerated since March 2005 after Govendo found them in contempt of court in connection with the Malite probate. The judge also suspended the two

lawyers from practicing law in the Superior Court.

Govendo ordered their imprisonment until they return attorneys' fees in the amount of \$1.14 million for the civil case and \$150,000 for the first distribution in the probate case—a total amount of \$1,288,500.

Since that order, the judge said, neither attorney has returned the fees in full or in part.

Last Aug. 15, Govendo allowed Yana and Atalig to leave the Corrections building for a few days each week to prepare a detailed account of their work with the Malite probate.

On Oct. 31, Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman suspended Yana from practicing law for 30 days for improper conduct after he brought

adoption cases to Rota to have another judge handle the cases.

Wiseman also required Yana to take a course within six months on Model Rules of Professional Conduct or the Professional Ethics required of attorneys engaged in the practice of law.

Prior to Wiseman's order, the CNMI Supreme Court vacated Govendo's ruling that suspended Yana and Atalig from practicing law. The justices said the trial court did not follow the

rules and procedures governing attorney discipline.

On Nov. 17, 2008, Govendo allowed the two lawyers to wear their civilian clothes while in custody at DOC and when appearing in court.

During the Dec. 5 review hearing, Yana and Atalig informed Govendo that they have not been receiving any of the court's orders while they were in custody.

The two lawyers said they also have not been allowed to wear

their civilian clothes at DOC despite the court's order.

At the Dec. 5 hearing, Govendo ordered both attorneys to remain imprisoned until they return the \$1.3 million.

Atalig and Yana shall be released from custody every Monday at 8am so that they may work toward satisfying the court orders, Govendo said.

The two lawyers, he said, are required to go back to Corrections every Wednesday at 8am.

Govendo said the two lawyers are allowed to wear civilian clothes while in custody and when appearing before the court.

## Man gets seven days for hitting ex with lighted cigarette

The Superior Court imposed yesterday a seven-day prison term on a man who hit his former girlfriend in the back with a lighted cigarette.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman sentenced Huiliang Gao to one year in prison, all suspended, except for seven days, for assault and battery.

Wiseman gave Gao credit for the days he had already served in jail. After completing the prison term, Gao will be placed

on a two-year probation.

The judge ordered the defendant to write a letter of apology to the victim and required him to perform 200 hours of community service.

Wiseman ordered Gao to pay a \$200 fine, \$25 in court assessment fee, plus probation fee.

Gao was charged with three counts of assault and battery, and one count of disturbing the peace.

The defendant was accused of hitting his former girlfriend

in the back with a lighted cigarette, kicking her on the leg, and punching her repeatedly in the head on July 11 and 17, 2007.

Gao entered a plea agreement with the government. He pleaded guilty to one count of assault and battery. The remaining charges were dismissed.

The factual basis of the plea agreement stated that on July 11, 2008, Gao unlawfully hit the victim in the back with a cigarette. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

## Worker files discrimination suit vs defunct Neo Fashion

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A nonresident worker filed a discrimination lawsuit yesterday against a defunct garment manufacturer, Neo Fashion Inc., which terminated her employment in 2007 allegedly due to her pregnancy.

Marichu V. Legaspi, through lawyer Stephen C. Woodruff, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to order Neo Fashion to pay her damages, court costs, and attorney's fees.

Neo Fashion Inc. shut down its factory in San Antonio in January 2008.

Woodruff stated in the complaint that during Legaspi's employment as a packer with Neo Fashion, she became pregnant. Woodruff said the company be-

came aware that Legaspi was three or four months pregnant in February 2007.

On Feb. 26, 2007, the company's administrative assistant confirmed to the production manager that the worker was indeed pregnant.

Woodruff said that soon after, the production manager, Soon Oh Lee, walked past Legaspi's work station, looked her over from head to toe and "gave her a very sharp look."

The lawyer said that on March 7, 2007, Legaspi was placed in a difficult position by the management because her pregnancy made it difficult for her to stand past 7pm and that the management wanted her to work up to 9:30pm.

The supervisor allegedly told Legaspi that she was a

"slow worker" because of her pregnancy.

Neo Fashion, he said, gave Legaspi a hard time regarding her pregnancy related expenses.

On April 3, 2007, Neo Fashion did not renew Legaspi's contract.

"Plaintiff believes that she was terminated from work because of her pregnancy," Woodruff asserted.

Woodruff said that Neo Fashion then hired at least 10 new employees.

The lawyer said that in a determination issued June 19, 2008, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled that Neo Fashion "did discharge plaintiff because of her sex [female and pregnancy]... a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended."

## PUBLIC NOTICE Attention Diabetics!

Pursuant to local and federal public health guidelines you are required to obtain an eye exam prior to December 31st of each year. Failure to do so may result in serious consequences including loss of vision and permanent blindness.

The cost of your exam is covered by medical insurance. If you are unable to pay, funding is available to cover your costs.

Report immediately to Marianas Eye Institute, Monday to Friday 8AM - 5PM or Saturday 9AM to 1PM. Marianas Eye Institute is located on Beach Road, Garapan across 13 Fishermen Monument. Tel. 235-9090. Deadline extensions available.

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December 31, 2008

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# Long-term solution sought for Tinian clinic

By KRISTI EATON  
kristi\_eaton@Saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Department of Public Health must focus on the long-term solution of finding a doctor for the Tinian Health Center in light of the hospital now having no doctors or mid-level providers officially able to work at the clinic, the Public Health Secretary said

yesterday.

"A long term solution is the most important," Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez said yesterday.

The Tinian Health Center has been without a doctor since July, when Ronaldo Toledo resigned. Physician assistant Terri Clawson was prescribing drugs with the oversight of a Saipan

doctor, but the Medical Licensing Board recently expressed concern about the number of narcotic drugs she has been prescribing. A Commonwealth Health Center doctor, Shirish Balachandra, was to act as Clawson's new remote supervisor, but the Licensing Board and Balachandra were unable to come to an agreement on su-

pervision, forcing Clawson and medic Juan Pangelinan to use the Good Samaritan law in order to treat patients with life or death injuries.

Villagomez, who was on leave for a few days last week, said he was going to speak with deputy secretary Pete Untalan, who is now on leave, and see where the situation stands. It

has been relatively quiet there lately, he said.

Villagomez said DPH must work to find a replacement doctor to solve the problem at the clinic. But in today's world, he said, it's hard to find doctors that are in general practice. Most doctors tend to specialize in a certain area to make more money. The ideal doctor to fill the role is someone at the end of his or her career, looking for a more relaxed way of living on an island such as Tinian or Rota,

Villagomez added.

DPH works with the National Health Services Corp., an organization that helps underserved communities find health care professionals. Villagomez said during the next recruitment gathering, a representative from Tinian would be sent.

The situation at the Tinian Health Center will be a part of DPH's end-of-the-year report that Villagomez, like other Cabinet members, will turn in to the governor.

## 'No funding identified for hiring of displaced immigration agents'

The vetoed budget bill for fiscal year 2009 offered government jobs to the employees that would be displaced by immigration federalization, but did not say how they would be paid.

In his recent veto message to the Legislature, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial pointed to the unfunded provision in the bill, which proposed the lateral transfer of all immigration personnel who are not employed by the federal government when the U.S. Department of Homeland Security assumes control of CNMI immigration in June 2009.

"While I support assisting our local immigration officers in security jobs, the Legislature fails to identify funds to go along with the positions," Fitial said.

He noted that the proposed appropriations for the Division of Immigration remain only through May 2009. "In essence, to comply with the requirements of this section, the departments within the three branches of our government must first terminate, lay off, or not renew existing employees to accommodate the immigration officers that they accept as transferees. This section is extremely prejudicial to our current employees," the governor said.

The CNMI has 72 immigration employees, including three at the U.S. Passport's Office.

According to Immigration Director Melvin Grey, less than 10 of the local immigration officers have a chance to qualify for the federal jobs. The rest are automatically disqualified because they are over the age limit of 37 or do not meet the requirement of at least three years work experience, among other reasons.

Last week, the House of Representatives passed a resolution asking DHS to give priority to local immigration employees and U.S. citizens in the Commonwealth when hiring in the CNMI.

The U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection is currently hiring officers for its future CNMI operations. But the resolution says the requirements and procedures in place for hiring appear to be inconsistent with the mandate of the immigration law, which guarantees priority consideration to local immigration employees.

The resolution asks DHS to waive the age restriction and remove the physical testing and training requirements for current CNMI immigration employees. (Agnes E. Donato)

**New Year's Eve COUNTDOWN Party**

Price: \$57.00 (Adult) \$33.00 (Child 6-11)

Package Includes: (BBQ Dinner Buffet w/ Polynesian Show together w/ Countdown Party)

New Year's Eve Gala B.B.Q. Dinner Buffet (Drinks are not included)

Polynesian full show

Raffle

Live Band performance

Long life Noodles (will be served at 11:30pm - Garden area)

Champagne for Toasting (will be served at 11:30pm)

Free Drinks after the Gala BBQ Dinner Buffet (Draft Beer, Softdrinks, and Juices)

2009 Fireworks Show

**Live Band Entertainment**

Entrance Registration at the LOBBY area

Raffle

Parlor Games

**2009 Fireworks Showdown**

**New Year's BRUNCH**

January 1, 2009

11:00am - 2:00pm

with Door Prizes

\$20.00 (Adult)

\$10.00 (Child 6-11)

**Action Station**

Tempura/ Roasted Beef/ Roasted suckling Pig

Dimsum/ Sukiyaki/ BBQ stick Satay

**Cold & Hot Dishes**

**Salad & Appetizers**

**Soup & Dessert Station**

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## SHIPPING SCHEDULE



Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
STADT HAMBURG	027E	12/20 Sat	12/18 Thu	12/18 Thu	12/16 Tue	12/13 Sat	12/26 Fri	12/22 Mon	12/21 Sun	12/14 Sun	12/14 Sun	12/22 Mon	12/26 Fri	12/28 Sun	SKIP
MELL SENOKO	015E	12/27 Sat	12/25 Thu	12/25 Thu	12/23 Tue	12/20 Sat	1/2 Fri	12/29 Mon	12/28 Sun	12/21 Sun	12/21 Sun	12/29 Mon	1/2 Fri	1/4 Sun	1/6 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	014E	1/3 Sat	1/1 Thu	1/1 Thu	12/30 Tue	12/27 Sat	1/9 Fri	1/5 Mon	1/4 Sun	12/28 Sun	12/28 Sun	1/5 Mon	1/9 Fri	1/11 Sun	1/13 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	028E	1/10 Sat	1/8 Thu	1/8 Thu	1/6 Tue	1/3 Sat	1/16 Fri	1/12 Mon	1/11 Sun	1/4 Sun	1/4 Sun	1/12 Mon	1/16 Fri	1/18 Sun	1/20 Tue
MELL SENOKO	016E	1/17 Sat	1/15 Thu	1/15 Thu	1/13 Tue	1/10 Sat	1/23 Fri	1/19 Mon	1/18 Sun	1/11 Sun	1/11 Sun	1/19 Mon	1/23 Fri	1/25 Sun	1/27 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	015E	1/24 Sat	1/22 Thu	1/22 Thu	1/20 Tue	1/17 Sat	1/30 Fri	1/26 Mon	1/25 Sun	1/18 Sun	1/18 Sun	1/26 Mon	1/30 Fri	2/1 Sun	2/3 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
STADT HAMBURG	027E	1/3 Sat	1/4 Sun	1/4 Sun	1/6 Tue	1/8 Thu	1/10 Sat	1/11 Sun	1/13 Tue	1/16 Fri	1/17 Sat	1/22 Thu	2/10 Tue	2/8 Sun
MELL SENOKO	015E	1/10 Sat	1/11 Sun	1/11 Sun	SKIP	1/15 Thu	1/17 Sat	1/18 Sun	1/20 Tue	1/23 Fri	1/24 Sat	1/29 Thu	2/17 Tue	2/15 Sun
MELL SENTOSA	014E	1/17 Sat	1/18 Sun	1/18 Sun	1/20 Tue	1/22 Thu	1/24 Sat	1/25 Sun	1/27 Tue	1/30 Fri	1/31 Sat	2/5 Thu	2/24 Tue	2/22 Sun
STADT HAMBURG	028E	1/24 Sat	1/25 Sun	1/25 Sun	SKIP	1/29 Thu	1/31 Sat	2/1 Sun	2/3 Tue	2/6 Fri	2/7 Sat	2/12 Thu	3/3 Tue	3/1 Sun
MELL SENOKO	016E	1/31 Sat	2/1 Sun	2/1 Sun	2/3 Tue	2/5 Thu	2/7 Sat	2/8 Sun	2/10 Tue	2/13 Fri	2/14 Sat	2/19 Thu	3/10 Tue	3/8 Sun
MELL SENTOSA	015E	2/7 Sat	2/8 Sun	2/8 Sun	SKIP	2/12 Thu	2/14 Sat	2/15 Sun	2/17 Tue	2/20 Fri	2/21 Sat	2/26 Thu	3/17 Tue	3/15 Sun

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# Travel industry cleanup hauls 750 lbs of trash

The annual Travel Industry Cleanup organized by the Japan Saipan Travel Association and the Korean Travel Association of Saipan last Saturday netted a total of 750 lbs of trash and debris collected from the heart of Saipan's tourist district in downtown Garapan.

An estimated 180 industry volunteers participated in the Dec. 27 cleanup that was conducted from the scenic American Memorial Park down Beach Road to the Carolinian Utt and then back along the beaches to the park.

JSTA and KTAS members were joined by the Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas Islands, Northern Marianas Dive Operators Association, PDM Promoters, Inc., Beautify CNMI, Marianas Visitors Authority, other travel partners and

private citizens.

"It is very important that we maintain a beautiful environment for visitors, as we are expecting a lot of tourists for Christmas and New Year's vacation period," said the organizers.

"Our community is fortunate to have associations such as JSTA and KTAS that are strong advocates and are very involved in keeping our islands beautiful," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "We appreciate all the cleanup participants dedicating their time on a weekend to help our community. They remind us all to take pride in our islands—our home—and that we should keep our community beautiful, not only for our visitors but, for future generations as well."

The Travel Industry Cleanup is held each December. (MVA)



Employees of Hard Rock Cafe and other area businesses joined the Travel Industry Cleanup on Saturday, Dec. 27, in Garapan, Saipan. The annual event, spearheaded by the Japan Saipan Travel Association and the Korean Travel Association of Saipan, gathered 750 lbs in a show of island pride by 180 cleanup participants.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## Extended hours OK'd for sale of liquor

Just for today and the early hours of tomorrow, establishments on the island that serve alcoholic beverages will be allowed to extend the sale of liquor up to 4am of Jan. 1, 2009.

The extension will apply only to Class-3 on-sale license holders and does not allow any further expansion of the extended hours,

according to a Commerce Department notice issued yesterday.

The time extension is being provided in accordance with 4

CMC, Section 5556.

These extended hours are only for the evening of Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2008, until 4am on

Thursday, Jan. 1, 2009.

"In addition, in observance of the National Drugged and Drunk Driving (3D) Prevention Month,

all Class-3 retail dealer on-sale establishments shall exercise responsible alcohol sales and shall encourage their patrons to drink alcohol responsibly during the extended hours of operation," said Commerce Secretary Michael J. Ada.

"Any abuse of the extension will not be tolerated and shall result in permanent suspension of such privilege," he added.

For more information, call the ABTC Division at 664-3065. (Saipan Tribune)

## Hard Rock to host first New Year's countdown

Hard Rock Café Saipan is inviting the public to enjoy the New Year's Eve with special entertainment treats.

The show, dubbed "New Year's Eve Countdown," starts at 10pm tonight (Wednesday, Dec. 31) until 2am (Thursday, Jan. 1).

Entrance is free.

Assistant general manager Aldwin Culiati said homegrown talents would make the night a fitting way to welcome 2009.

Local rock band Frozen Nipple will perform live to spice up the Masquerade Show that will feature Final Extreme, the second placer in the CNMI Best Dance Crew competition, and the creative and outlandish costumes of the Most Talented Divas.

Coordinating the event is Sharmaine Artade.

"Come and enjoy the show and the champagne toast, beers and special cocktails," Culiati said.

This is the first time that Hard Rock Café will be doing a New Year's Eve Countdown.

Guests who order a steak set will be entitled to a complimentary glass of wine or beer and a 25 percent off Rock Shop Coupon. The coupon is valid only on New Year's Eve. (Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)

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Cohort 2 of the Workforce Investment Agency finish their administrative assistant training at the Northern Marianas College.

## WIA ends administrative ass't training

The Workforce Investment Agency and the Northern Marianas College have collaborated to provide training programs that will help participants acquire the skills necessary to be able to compete in the job market. The latest batch of WIA participants successfully completed the administrative assistants training at NMC.

Currently, there are a total of 31 participants referred to the NMC Community Development Institute to attend: Keyboarding, e-mail, the best way to communicate, how to use word processing applications, creating digital presentations, how to use spreadsheet applications, communication in the

workplace, stress management, basic customer service skills training, work etiquette training and time management.



Kansou



Obichang



Aguon



Ada

A total of 17 participants have completed the courses and are receiving intensive training at the workplace or have chosen to further their education.

Leslie Ada, Crystal Lizama and Joanne Castro are with

the Torres Brothers law firm; Victoria Aldan has enrolled full time at NMC for a degree program; Meagan Agulto has

been hired full time at the Division of Revenue & Taxation; Rosario Camacho, Ireksin Made and Chantel Taitano have been selected for training at NMC's Office of Records and Admission; Jennifer Ada and Ina Ruben, who were both

already under the WIA Work Experience Program and were placed at Joeten Enterprises, attended these courses to enhance their skills at the workplace.

There are 14 more participants that will be completing these courses by March 12, 2009. Each participant receives a certificate of completion from NMC, providing the employer the assurance that these individuals come with the required credential for administrative entry-level positions. Additionally, these credentials enhance the individual's resumé at their current employment or as they search the market for employment opportunities. (PR)

## Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

### December 31, 1998

#### Year-end report: Is paradise lost?

In a downtown tourist strip where hordes of people used to descend on a beehive of stores and hotels, Mary Anne's clothes shop remains one of the few that is still surviving by the day through the hard times gripping Saipan. Standing outside, she tries to wave passers-by streaming through the sidewalk into her store, its glass facade plastered with cardboard signs announcing sales discount of up to 50 percent. But few take notice or buy. If business remains bad, Mary Anne says she has no choice but to close shop like hundreds of others which have folded up in recent months on the sidelines of the worst economic contagion to hit this once bustling Pacific island paradise.

#### Year-end report: Health-care system, 1998

The delivery of health care is the largest ticket item on any government's budget and the NMI is no exception. As demands for more health care delivery expands by leaps and bounds, the local health care system finds itself in a bind when austerity measures came into effect this year. It meant more for less. Although the Department of Health and Environmental Services is one of three most important government agencies, it too suffered budgetary cuts when the administration imposed a 13.4 across the board reduction in departmental fund allocations. The department's budget was reduced from \$41 million in fiscal year 1998 to \$33.9 million for the current fiscal year. The money contraction included severe cuts in medical supplies from \$3.5 million in FY '98 to \$982,000 although there's \$2 million in Imprest Fund for emergency medication. It means the department must temporarily come up with creative means to ensure that medical supplies are ordered on a timely basis. Villagomez assures that he's working out with the department of finance and the office of management and budget to set this matter in order.

### December 31, 1999

#### Y2K bug: 'Don't panic. Be prepared'

With few hours before the New Year, government agencies are on top of the situation as they assure island residents of continuous service and uninterrupted utilities during the rollover into 2000. But experts advice the people to stock up on food, bottled water, candles and batteries; keep some cash on hand; and have emergency kits ready for the next few days just in case of any problem triggered by the so-called millennium bug. "The important thing is not to panic. It's not a bad idea to go ahead and prepare the basic necessities that will last for at least three to five days," said Tony Calvo, operations chief of the Y2K Task Force set up by the government.

#### House bill eyes CNMI-wide recycling plan

The House of Representatives has begun steps to create an island-wide program aimed at promoting recycling of trash as well as reducing solid waste dumped in landfills by imposing disposal fees on materials being imported into the CNMI. Under House Bill 11-501 called the Commonwealth Recycling Act of 1999, the government will assess these fees on top of other government taxes to ensure that their disposal will be taken care of. The legislation, sponsored by Reps. Manuel A. Tenorio and Heinz S. Hofschneider, was passed by the lower house Wednesday and now heads to the Senate for action.

### December 31, 2001

#### 2002: Bumpy year for NMI tourism

The adverse effects of the Asian crisis and of the September 11 crash attacks on the United States will remain as the biggest stumbling blocks to the much hoped-for turnaround of the Northern Marianas tourism industry. The Marianas Visitors Authority is wary that that recession in Japan will not be over in the next few years, noting the need to immediately develop new markets for the local tourism industry, in order to generate revenue both for the government and private businesses. MVA Board Chair Dave M. Sablan mentions an ongoing discussion between tourism industry players and the incoming administration of Gov.-elect Juan N. Babauta and Lt. Gov.-elect Diego T. Benavente on a more extensive marketing strategies that would promote the Northern Marianas as a preferred destination not only to Japanese travelers but also to potential visitors from other countries in Asia like the mainland China, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

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<b>Ichiban</b> <b>SALE \$7.99</b> Limit 1	<b>Lotus Brand Rice</b> Limit 1 <b>SALE \$23.99</b> 50 lbs.	<b>Royal Thai Lady Rice</b> Limit 1 <b>SALE \$27.99</b> 50 lbs.	<b>Salad Oil</b> 5 Gallon Limit 1 <b>SALE \$29.99</b>	<b>Milk Fish</b> <b>SALE \$1.49</b> /lb. <b>\$58.95</b> /case	<b>Tilapia</b> <b>99¢</b> /lb. <b>SALE \$38.95</b> /case	<b>Master A-1 Tuna</b> <b>SALE 99¢</b> each Limit 12 Cans
<b>Spam All Flavors</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b> /each Limit 1 Case	<b>Revlon Color Silk</b> <b>SALE \$3.99</b>	<b>Black Label Luncheon Loaf</b> <b>SALE \$1.39</b> /each Limit 12	<b>Warm Coke Pepsi</b> <b>SALE \$11.99</b> warm /case <b>\$13.95</b> cold Limit 1 Case	<b>Ritz Soda</b> <b>SALE \$10.99</b> /case	<b>Miller Lite</b> <b>SALE \$22.99</b> /case Limit 1 Case	<b>HITE Beer</b> <b>SALE \$14.50</b> /case Limit 1 Case

## FROZEN FOOD

<b>Chopped Ham</b> <b>SALE \$17.99</b> /10 lbs.	<b>Gusto Smoked</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b> /lb.	<b>Beef Rib Finger</b> <b>SALE \$2.89</b> /lb.	<b>Bar S Bacon</b> <b>SALE \$2.39</b> /pkg.
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<b>Chamorro Sausage</b> <b>SALE \$3.99</b> /pkg.	<b>Family Bag Special</b>	<b>Chicken Winglets</b> <b>SALE \$9.99</b> /5 lbs.	<b>Ground Pork</b> <b>SALE \$17.99</b> /pkg.
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<b>Miller Sausage</b> <b>SALE \$14.99</b> /pkg.	<b>Pork Hocks</b> ..... \$8.95 <b>Pork Belly</b> ..... \$10.95 <b>Pork Adobo</b> ..... \$9.95 <b>Pork Spareribs</b> ..... \$6.95 <b>Pork Chops</b> ..... \$13.98 <b>Beef Stew</b> ..... \$13.95 <b>Beef Backribs</b> ..... \$8.95 <b>Beef Shortribs</b> ..... \$15.95 <b>Stewing Chicken</b> ..... \$5.95 <b>Quarter Leg s</b> ..... \$5.95	<b>Kam Yen Jan Chinese Style Sausage</b> <b>SALE \$3.49</b> /pkg.	<b>Turkey Tail</b> <b>SALE \$19.99</b> /cs.
<b>Hoffy Portuguese Sausage</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b> /pkg.	<b>Bar S Jumbo Franks</b> <b>SALE \$1.05</b> /pkg.	<b>Hoffy Hot Sausage</b> <b>SALE \$5.99</b> /5 lbs.	

<b>Smoked Salmon Collar</b> <b>SALE \$27.99</b> /10 lbs.	<b>Marinated Milkfish</b> <b>SALE \$4.99</b> /pkg. <b>Marinated Baby Milkfish</b> <b>\$3.99</b> /pkg.	<b>Green Mussels</b> <b>SALE \$4.99</b> /5 lbs.	<b>Dragon King Shrimp 26/30</b> <b>SALE \$3.99</b> /lb.	<b>Vega Shrimp</b> <b>SALE \$4.99</b> /lb.
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## PRODUCE

<b>Potato (Jumbo)</b> <b>SALE 89¢</b> /lb.	<b>Orange</b> <b>SALE 89¢</b> /lb.	<b>Onion</b> <b>SALE 59¢</b> /lb.	<b>Korean Pears</b> <b>SALE \$1.69</b> /lbs. <b>\$54.99</b> /case	<b>Garlic</b> <b>SALE 89¢</b> /pack-4 pcs.
<b>Red Apple Cello</b> <b>SALE \$3.99</b> /Bag	<b>Banana</b> <b>SALE \$1.09</b> /lb.	<b>Cantaloupe</b> <b>SALE 99¢</b> /lb.	<b>U.S. Eggs Extra Large</b> <b>SALE \$2.09</b> /doz.	

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<b>Top Detergent Powder 3 kg.</b> <b>SALE \$5.99</b>	<b>Gain Powder Detergent 120 Loads</b> <b>SALE \$16.99</b>	<b>Gain Liquid Detergent</b> <b>SALE \$4.99</b>	<b>Clorox 96 oz.</b> <b>SALE \$2.99</b>	<b>Joy Dishwashing Liquid 90 oz.</b> <b>SALE \$5.99</b>	<b>Fugo Candle Jar</b> <b>SALE \$11.95</b> /each	<b>9" Cake Saver</b> <b>SALE \$2.50</b>
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<b>Precious Moments Baby Wipes Refil 80's</b> <b>SALE \$1.50</b>	<b>2pc Stainless Steel Tong</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b>	<b>Toothbrush 4's</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b>	<b>Care Bears Kids Toothbrush 3's</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b>	<b>Disposable Razors 20's</b> <b>SALE \$1.75</b>	<b>Disposable Razors 10's</b> <b>SALE 99¢</b>	<b>Disposable Razors Touch 3 2s</b> <b>SALE \$1.25</b>
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<b>Fresh Cup Coffee Filters 200's</b> <b>SALE \$1.99</b>	<b>Champion Door Knob</b> <b>SALE \$4.50</b>	<b>Panasonic Batteries Size D &amp; C 2's</b> <b>SALE 75¢</b>	<b>Panasonic Batteries Size AA 4's</b> <b>SALE 75¢</b>	<b>Horse Shampoo 32 oz.</b> <b>SALE \$1.49</b>	<b>Sunsilk Shampoo Straighten Up Only</b> <b>SALE \$2.99</b>	<b>Napa Motor Oil</b> <b>SALE \$2.95</b>	<b>Butane Gas</b> <b>SALE \$20.99</b> /case Limit 2
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## GROCERY ITEMS

<b>Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup</b> <b>SALE 89¢</b>	<b>Hormel Chili (No Beans)</b> <b>SALE \$1.59</b>	<b>Hormel Corned Beef Hash</b> <b>SALE \$1.79</b> Sliced	<b>Dutch Colony Luncheon Meat</b> <b>SALE \$1.35</b> Limit 12	<b>Coco Tuna</b> <b>SALE \$1.09</b>	<b>Beach Cliff Sardines</b> <b>SALE 79¢</b>	<b>Ligo Sardines</b> <b>SALE 3 for \$1.00</b>
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<b>Del Monte Kernel Corn</b> <b>SALE 69¢</b>	<b>Del Monte Fruit Cocktail</b> <b>SALE \$3.99</b>	<b>Carnation Milk</b> <b>SALE 99¢</b>	<b>Golden State Vinegar</b> <b>SALE \$2.99</b>	<b>Sugar</b> <b>SALE \$1.49</b> /kg.	<b>Del Monte Spaghetti Sauce All Flavors</b> <b>SALE \$1.29</b>	<b>Ox &amp; Plam Corned Beef</b> <b>SALE \$2.29</b> /each Limit 12
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<b>Kikkoman Limit 1 Cs. (6pcs. 1 cs)</b> <b>SALE \$3.79</b> 1.6 lb. <b>\$6.99</b> 3 lb.	<b>Fresco Vegetable Oil 1 Gallon</b> <b>SALE \$8.75</b>	<b>Vlasic Dill Pickles</b> <b>SALE \$6.99</b> Whole <b>\$5.95</b> Whole	<b>Nestea 36 qts.</b> <b>SALE \$6.99</b>	<b>Water 500 ml.</b> <b>SALE \$5.95</b> /case	<b>Sunkist All Flavors</b> <b>SALE \$5.95</b> /case	<b>Kool Aid 34 Qt.</b> <b>SALE \$5.99</b>	<b>Real Fresh Milk</b> <b>SALE \$17.95</b> /case
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**EVERYDAY LOW PRICE • WHILE SUPPLIES LAST • PRICES CHANGES WITHOUT NOTICE**



# Opinion

Hafa Adali

## Saipan Tribune

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## EDITORIAL

### Somalia still sinking

The Bush administration is trying to head off another disaster in Somalia, a failed state that has confounded three successive U.S. administrations. The administration won't succeed. Somalia's Western-backed "transitional government" is crumbling, and Islamic militants allied with al-Qaida are threatening to take over the small parts of the country they don't already control—mainly the capital, its port and the town where the remains of the parliament sit. U.S. diplomats have attempted to stop this by trying to persuade the United Nations to sponsor a peacekeeping mission; they have also urged Ethiopia to postpone the withdrawal of its troops, which have been fighting the Islamists for the past two years.

Neither proposal has gained traction. As the United States painfully learned in the early 1990s, even a large and capable foreign military force with a U.N. mandate would be seriously challenged in Mogadishu, where it is easy to rally gunmen against a perceived invader. In any case, there is no prospect for assembling such an expedition. U.N.-mandated peacekeeping operations are already failing in Congo and Sudan because of inadequate resources and the peacekeeping troops' lack of professionalism. Unless President Bush chooses to end his term as his father did, by landing Marines in Mogadishu, no international force will rescue Somalia.

That means this strategically located country will continue to grow more miserable and more threatening to the rest of the world. The radical Islamists known as al-Shabab are comparable to the Taliban of Afghanistan in the extremism of their rule and in their willingness to harbor foreigners recruited by al-Qaida. Some of the authors of the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Africa are believed to be sheltered by the movement, along with fresh recruits from other African countries. Somalia could become a base for terrorist operations around the region, even as pirates based along its northern coast continue to threaten international shipping lanes.

The Obama administration, which will inherit this mess, will have to hope that Somalis will react against harsh Islamic fundamentalism that has no precedent in the country. As veteran analyst John Prendergast of the Enough Project points out, there are moderate Islamic factions; one of them recently reached a power-sharing agreement with part of the transitional government at U.N.-sponsored talks. If African neighbors and Western governments continue to support the consolidation and expansion of that centrist alliance, the fundamentalists may eventually face serious opposition. U.S. forces in the region, meanwhile, will have to seize opportunities to strike at known al-Qaida targets, and more determined naval action is needed to stop the pirates. Somalia requires a vast nation-building effort, sponsored, supported and funded—if not carried out—by outside powers. The sad truth is that neither the United Nations nor any other alliance is up to the job.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post



## Blockade's effect has been a humanitarian catastrophe

By EYAD EL-SARRAJ  
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

From my home in the Gaza Strip, I followed the American election season with interest. Many times I heard the personal stories of Americans without access to health care and the toll illness has taken on their lives.

I can relate. For months, I waited in Gaza, unable to leave (despite my British passport) and increasingly desperate to secure a medical appointment about 45 minutes away in Israel.

The advanced medical treatment I need is not available here. Although it is readily available just up the coast in nearby Tel Aviv, I was not allowed to visit my doctor there without permission from the Israelis, who still control our borders and, as the occupying power, remain responsible for the welfare of our civilian population.

In the end, I waited three months for a medical permit to travel to treat my multiple myeloma. My requests were denied repeatedly until an Israeli friend who teaches at Tel Aviv University intervened and helped me secure a one-day permit.

That there are still Israelis willing to promote the rights of Palestinians provides me with what little hope I have these days. The majority of Palestinians want only to live with peace and equality, accepting Israelis as our neighbors—but not as our superiors or as our jailers.

The situation in Gaza got worse early in November when Israel tightened its blockade of Gaza. Our food, fuel and medical supplies have been severely limited. The blockade has ruined our economy and reduced many among us to a level of economic desperation that has alarmed United Nations officials.

According to Karen Koning Abu Zayd, the commissioner-general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, the human toll of this siege is terribly grave.

Gaza has "been closed for so much longer than ever before ... and we have nothing in our warehouses. ... It will be a catastrophe if this persists, a disaster," she said.

And U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently called for the immediate easing of the closure because of "deprivations of basic supplies and human dignity."

The secretary-general rightfully condemned Palestinian rocket fire at civilian targets in Israel. Such rockets are morally wrong and strategically inept. Yet the blockade that Israel has clamped on 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza is a collective punishment that harms men, women and children who have no power to control those firing the rockets.

Rather than turn Gazans against Hamas, the blockade's effect has

been a humanitarian catastrophe that alienates Gazans young and old from both Israel and the West. Even I, a practicing psychiatrist for decades and a longtime advocate of coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis, am having trouble coping with the hardships to which we are subjected.

Travel is crucial to me, not just for medical reasons but for reasons of basic sanity. I long to see dear friends, to see the world again, to breathe fresh air and, most of all, to reassure my senses that there are normal things and normal people outside Gaza's debilitating confines.

The last time I left Gaza, before this most recent medical trip, was several months ago, and the time I spent with friends in Ramallah and Jerusalem was rejuvenating. This time, however, I was only granted permission to leave for a day.

At Erez checkpoint, where I left Gaza along with four other medical patients, Israeli soldiers spoke through loudspeakers and looked down at us through cameras.

"Open your bag," one shouted.

When the woman in front of me asked a question, the soldier ordered her to take everything out of her suitcase. She was humiliated as she had to hold even her underwear up to the camera. I was made to walk through the X-ray machine three times, even though I told the soldiers it was dangerous because of my medical condition.

The soldiers seemed intent not only to determine that we were not bombers but to shame us. What good can come of exercising such domineering power over medical patients?

When one of the Israeli soldiers approached us, he was grinning and carrying a huge machine gun across his massive body. I thought that he must feel the power of his muscles and his gun as well as my weakness, with my frail body and my obedience to his orders. But the psychiatrist in me could not escape the question, "Who is frightened?"—because I was not. I was angry, but not afraid.

On my way back to Gaza, I decided to buy some little plants with flowers to bring home. A soldier shouted at me: "Flowers are not allowed."

The best hope at the moment for the region is that President-elect Barack Obama and American politicians will veer away from knee-jerk support for Israel's actions against Palestinians in favor of even-handed policies that recognize that Palestinians have a right to freedom, to travel, to health care and even to simple daily pleasures—like freely carrying flowers home.

*El-Sarraj is the founder and president of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program and a commissioner of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights.*



EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com); or through our website at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

# Count me among the Agents of Change

*The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!*

*“It is impossible to help another being directly. It is only possible to make [a] catalyst available in whatever form. ...We cannot offer short cuts to enlightenment. It can only be accomplished by the self, for the self. Another self cannot teach enlightenment, but only teach information, inspiration, or a sharing of love, of mystery, of the unknown that makes the other-self reach out and begin the seeking process.” (B1, 161-162)—The Ra Material*

In a previous article (*The Paradox of Change*, Saipan Tribune, Nov. 28 and Dec. 5, 2007), I spoke on the art of getting one’s message across to a community, as well as how to identify the stages of change that community might be going through. The paradox is that those who are most in need of change are the hardest to reach with the necessary information, inspiration and love that would help free them. Let’s talk a little more about that.

## The Challenge

People want change. Or, so they say. Actually, if you spoke to most people, you’d discover that what they want is for things to change for the better. They want to get richer, happier, and more secure, but don’t wish to get poorer, unhappy or lose a degree of security or peace of mind.

The reality is that things generally must go through a bit of reconstruction before they can truly get better. The old must be torn away, before the new can be erected. Before you can quit smoking, or be free of drugs, you must go through withdrawal. Before you can get healthy, you must go through a healing crisis. In matters of direct individual concern, this is the challenge: People have to be willing to let go, to be uncomfortable, to be vulnerable, even if just for a while, while the transition occurs.

The challenge, on a larger scale, on community/global level, is getting people to realize that they have been living a lie; that things are not what they seem; that events are not random but proceed according to plan; that the truth is being branded as subversive; that “they” are not like us; that what passes for science is really marketing in disguise; that what they fear would actually set them free; that debate is merely a smokescreen people use to delay and defuse the actions which would empower. The list goes on, but here again, a community-society must, en masse, be willing to let go, to be uncomfortable, to be vulnerable, even if just for a while, while the transition occurs.

And here’s where the challenge exists. In order to change, we must all adopt a new way of thinking and behaving, as a group. Once this change takes place in our thinking and acting, by extension our experience on the planet changes.

# Thank you

Today is a victory for parents, children and adults living with autism! Although, the road ahead is long and the obstacles we will face are not new to us, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rep. Heinz Hofschneider and Rep. Tina Sablan for their hard work and commitment to those living with autism. A special thank you to Rep. Ralph Torres, Rep. Rosemond Santos, Rep. Ray Palacios for also publicly addressing the importance and, their support of HB 16-135. *Un dungku’lu na Si Yu’us Ma’ase!*

As I sat in the galley listening to Rep. Hofschneider and all who voiced their support, I could not help but relive the struggles, pain, sleepless nights, the stares of the people as they wondered what is “wrong” with my child, the gossip of society that my husband and I are unfit parents and, the stigma that this society has imposed on my daughter and her peers: That she *can’t*, she *won’t* and she will *never*

# Predictable

I had a great time over at my folks for the holidays. I hope everyone’s holiday was as good. I read the “discrimination at church” letter. Not hard to imagine, really. Predictable, in fact.

When one group of people comes in and seems to “take over” a thing, an institution, a place, an island, the first people will not like it. When Hawaii was made a state, outsiders were and still are disliked by Hawaiians. Palestinians dislike the Jews that came when Israel was created, and the Jews in turn dislike the non-Jews. In Africa, tribal wars are non-stop. This is human nature and it’s been going on

The challenge is that by the time you are intellectually capable of understanding the very words and concepts that change requires, you’ve already had to accept their polar opposites in order to survive, and by extension, you perpetuate the very reality you need to change. In other words:

By the time you’re frustrated enough with working for someone else, and making them wealthy, you’re locked into a system of debt, responsibility, image maintenance, impression, shame and obligation from which it seems impossible to extricate yourself.

By the time you make enough money in this system to be able to change it, you’re too vested in keeping it the way it is just so you can survive.

By the time you gain the courage and insight to take charge of your health, you’ve been trained to believe that others hold the key to your health. You’ve been converted to a religion of sorts that requires and often gets your blind faith in methods of treatment that actually make you sicker.

In other words: By the time you’re old enough and wise enough to question the belief system, you’ve been indoctrinated into the belief system to such a degree that opposition seems futile or contrary to your survival.

In still other words: By the time you’re really ready to have the new life you want, you’re too busy living the old life you don’t want. And escape seems darn near impossible.

It is for these reasons that change—real change—often comes when life, limb or some aspect of one’s identity or survival is threatened with imminent termination or extermination. Choices become clearer. Actions take on the necessary sense of urgency.

That’s why things often must get very bad—often at the threat of revolution, or teetering at the precipice of destruction—before they start to get good. The reality of impending doom or destruction of what exists must take hold in their minds, before people admit that change is necessary, and urgent, and before they find the necessary motivation to see things through, and do what must be done.

The good news, however, is that change is essentially a challenge of will. It doesn’t take any more money, any higher position or any more power and status than you currently have. You can start where you are and move toward where you want to be.

You must, however, be able to answer positively the following questions to decide if you are truly an agent of change:

Do I have the will power to actually think critically about life, about my situation, and about the world rather than simply parrot what others tell me?

Do I have the will power to “opt out” of the current system, with all its perceived perks and benefits, and pursue a different dream and stream toward happiness?

Do I have the necessary will power to weather the storm of indifference, ridicule, opposition, attack and even the threat of annihilation, which may follow such a decision, in order to realize the dream I envision?

Do I have the will power to sacrifice my own present individual happiness and safety for the sake of a future happiness and safety and perhaps the happiness and safety of a community of others?

Do I have the will power to persevere even after many years,

amount to anything because she is not *normal*!

To go back to that time is very painful.

But today, we were given back our voice! Today we were given back a sense of hope! Today I have hope and I believe that I am not alone!

To my family, thank you for your undying support and your willingness to learn more about this disease that has afflicted many, including our very own, Maria. You give me the strength to move forward and break the barriers.

To anyone who has in one way or another touched Maria’s life, thank you for never giving up on her. Thank you for being her friend.

To the parents and adults living with autism, we will *prevail*! The torch we pass on will be one that is lit. We will fight to break

since before we evolved into homo sapiens. It’s something that will always be inside us as humans. Groups of people will associate with those that we feel are like us. We tend to stay away from those that are not like us. We will resent those that attempt to take things from “us”. In your mind or in your yard, those things are what we imagine them to be—and the church is both. I don’t think anyone wants a group to come into a place that was once the primary dominion of the first group and see it dominated by a second group unless they have a vested interest in that second group.

## THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT *Creating economic success for the CNMI*

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE  
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to [walt@passionprofit.com](mailto:walt@passionprofit.com).

perhaps even a lifetime of preaching to the choir, advocating on behalf of others, encouraging new ways of thought, setting an example by altering my own lifestyle, fighting, marching, protesting, and challenging the system, only to realize it is impossible to help another directly, but only to be a catalyst that they may or may not heed?

If you can answer yes to these questions, you will surely have what it takes to quit smoking, change your diet, lose weight, change professions, learn a new skill and/or pursue your life’s passion—to realize the dreams of individual pride and happiness that makes life worth living.

But, you may also find, to your amazement, that you have within you the seeds of true greatness, the ability to lead others by the example you set, the gift to inspire others to embrace the challenge, the talent for moving them to take the necessary actions in the interest of change. You may find, that you are indeed an agent of change—better, true, meaningful change—that the world has been waiting for. Excelsior!

■ ■ ■ ■

**Note:** MLK Day and “Obama Day” coming in January! The African-American Cultural Preservation Committee announces the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr. Day activities and commemoration—along with a special event to acknowledge the historical significance of the upcoming Inauguration. There will be dinners, our annual “civil rights march” in Garapan, public forum and panel discussion, essay contest winners performance, plus—from the people who brought you the famously successful “Saipan Soul Train Night”—a down home, Southern style, Cajun-flavored, buffet and social, plus events on Tinian and Rota. It all begins Jan. 10, 2009! Stay tuned for more details.

**Note:** For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit [www.passionprofit.com](http://www.passionprofit.com)!

■ ■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

*Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt’s philosophy and formula visit [www.saipanpreneur.com](http://www.saipanpreneur.com) and [www.passionprofit.com](http://www.passionprofit.com)*

the barriers that hold you prisoners of your community and your minds. Equal access, equal opportunity and, the right to live a life that is respected belongs to all citizens, including *our* children and *you*!

And to the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, the Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems, Inc., thank you for all your support, dedication and commitment to educating and informing our community and being our partners in advocating for all children and adults with special needs.

I am forever grateful.

Marissa F. Guerrero  
Dandan, Saipan

This is the primary problem on Saipan: Guest workers want a better life, and the natives see that quest as a threat, and they are correct in thinking this is a threat. Anyone who thinks that the guest workers will not vote as a bloc that removes many powers of the natives is naive. I do not condone the actions of the Mr. Cepeda, but I understand them. What is causing the actions is clear.






William McCue  
Wellington, Florida



Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼76°	▲85° ▼75°	▲84° ▼75°

### Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲85 ▼76
Palau	Showers	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Rain	▲85 ▼77
Chuuk	Rain	▲89 ▼77
Pohnpei	Rain	▲86 ▼77
Kosrae	Rain	▲84 ▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲85 ▼77

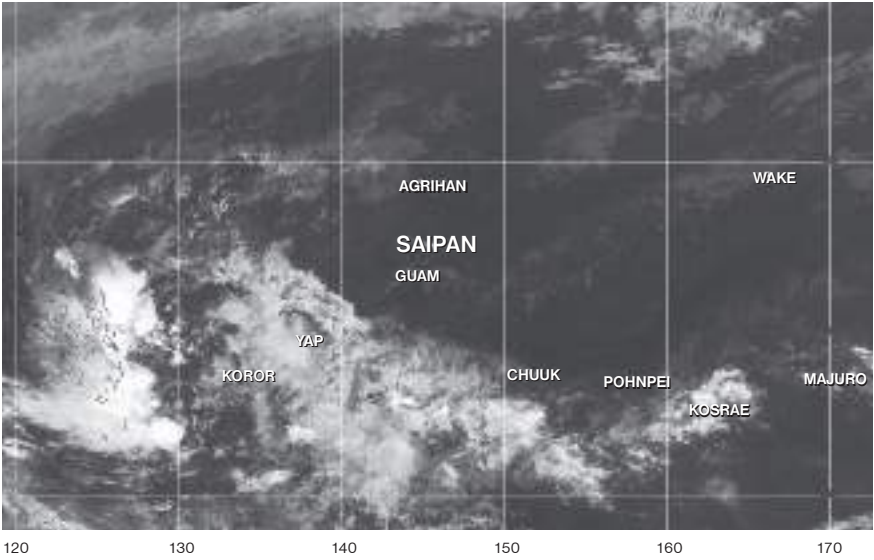
### Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲75 ▼62
Beijing	Sunny	▲30 ▼10
Hong Kong	Rain	▲64 ▼59
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲78 ▼69
London	Partly Sunny	▲41 ▼36
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲70 ▼48
Manila	Rain	▲82 ▼73
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲69 ▼54
Miami	Showers	▲79 ▼61
New York	Cloudy	▲42 ▼19
Osaka	Rain/Snow	▲44 ▼32
Paris	Dreary	▲41 ▼33
Pusan	Sunny	▲39 ▼17
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲48 ▼32
Salem	Showers	▲43 ▼35
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲56 ▼46
Seoul	Sunny	▲28 ▼10
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲50 ▼34
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲43 ▼22

### Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:54AM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
11:02AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
4:42PM Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
9:07PM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet

### Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, DEC. 30, 2008

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N175E to northeast of Wake Island at 21N170E then continues westward as a shear line across Pagan at 18N146E to 17N138E and turns southwestward to end at 14N130E. Cloudiness and wide spread rain are occurring along and up to 300 miles northwest of the cold front. Patchy rain is present along and up to 200 miles north of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough runs eastward from a surface circulation centered over Halmahera island at 2N128E through another circulation centered south of Yap at 3N141E then turns southeastward to end at EQ145E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring near the second circulation southeast of Yap between the equator and 6N from 136E to 147E. A surface trough reaches northward from the second circulation to 18N138E. Similar weather is evident near the trough axis over Yap and Koror within 160 miles of a line from 6N140E to 11N134E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Kosrae and the Marshall Islands but south of Chuuk and Pohnpei within 125 miles of a line from 5N146E to 4N152E to 1N155E to 9N168E to 6N180.

### Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:43AM	5:57 PM
Thursday	6:43AM	5:58 PM
Friday	6:44AM	5:58 PM
Saturday	6:44AM	5:59 PM
Sunday	6:44AM	6:00 PM

### Moonrise/Moonset

Today	9:13AM	9:02 PM
Thursday	9:50AM	9:51 PM
Friday	10:26AM	10:39 PM
Saturday	11:01AM	11:29 PM
Sunday	11:38AM	

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS  
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS  
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS  
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI  
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE  
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ CAMPUS BULLETIN  
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

#### REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
  - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
  - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
  - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
  - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan  
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2008

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
<b>Saipan-Rota</b> CO9597 11:50am 12:25pm 1,7	<b>Rota-Saipan</b> CO 9598 3:25am 4:00am 5,6
<b>Saipan-Guam</b> CO9317 5:00am 5:50am Daily CO9313 8:30am 9:20am Daily CO9597 11:50am 1:20pm 1,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6 CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	<b>Guam-Saipan</b> CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am 1,2,3,4,7 CO9598 2:30am 4:00am 5,6 via Rota CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9600 10:20am 11:10am Daily CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
<b>Saipan-Narita</b> NW 099 5:00am 7:40am Daily NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily NW 075 4:55pm 7:30pm Daily	<b>Narita-Saipan</b> NW 076 10:15am 2:40pm Daily NW 077 6:25pm 1:25am+1 Daily NW 100 8:45pm 1:15am+1 Daily
<b>Saipan-Osaka</b> OZ 119 4:00am 6:40am 1,4,6 NW 083 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	<b>Osaka-Saipan</b> OZ 120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7 NW 084 10:40am 3:10pm Daily
<b>Saipan-Nagoya</b> NW 078 8:25am 11:05am Daily	<b>Nagoya-Saipan</b> NW 077 9:00pm 1:25am+1 Daily
<b>Saipan-Incheon</b> OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:20pm 7:00pm Daily	<b>Incheon-Saipan</b> OZ 605 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
<b>Saipan-Busan</b> OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7	<b>Busan-Saipan</b> OZ 607 9:30pm 2:40am+1 3,4,6,7
<b>Saipan-Shanghai</b> FM 844 2:50am 5:40am 2,6	<b>Shanghai-Saipan</b> FM 843 7:15pm 1:50am+1 1,5
<b>Rota-Guam</b> CO 9597 12:50pm 1:20pm 1,7	<b>Guam-Rota</b> CO 9598 2:30am 3:00am 5,6
<b>Guam-Manila</b> CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 3,5 via Koror CO 933 8:00pm 9:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	<b>Manila-Guam</b> CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror CO 934 11:10pm 4:40am+1 Daily PR 110 10:10pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	<b>Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**</b>			
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
<b>Saipan-Tinian</b>				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



## NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com)



**TOYS**  
**20% - 50%**  
**OFF**  
(SELECTED ONLY)

# Sara Market II

CAPITOL HILL • 322-9596

## New Year Sale

**HOUSEHOLD**  
**ITEMS**  
**10% - 25%**  
**OFF**  
(SELECTED ONLY)

DECEMBER 31 TO JANUARY 9, 2009 • WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

**SHOP & LEAVE TOTALLY COMPLETE**

FOOD STAMPS WELCOME • FRIENDLY SERVICE • EVERYDAY LOW PRICE  
SELECTED ITEMS ARE LIMITED PER CUSTOMER • PRICES CHANGES WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

**Leg Quarter**  
22 LBS. **\$19<sup>99</sup>**  
33 LBS. **\$23<sup>99</sup>**

**Whole Chicken**  
LIMIT 1 CASE  
**\$32<sup>99</sup>**

**Young Spare Ribs**  
10 LBS.  
**\$13<sup>99</sup>**

**Pork Spareribs**  
BBQ Adobo Cut  
20 LBS.  
**\$15<sup>99</sup>**

**Diamond G Calrose**  
Rice 50 LBS.  
**\$32<sup>99</sup>**

**Beef Spare Ribs**  
20 LBS.  
**\$23<sup>99</sup>**

**Pork Riblets**  
10 LBS.  
**\$10<sup>99</sup>**

**Turkey Tail**  
20 LBS.  
**\$12<sup>99</sup>**

**Jasmine Lotus Rice**  
50 LBS. (LIMIT 1 SACK)  
**\$24<sup>99</sup>**

**Ichiban**  
Limit 2 CASES  
**\$7<sup>99</sup>**  
/CASE

### FROZEN MEAT • SEAFOOD • PRODUCE • GROCERIES

**Kool-Aid**  
32 oz.  
**\$7<sup>99</sup>**

**Tang**  
22 qts.  
**\$5<sup>99</sup>**

**Nestea Iced Tea**  
36 qts.  
**\$7<sup>99</sup>**

**Master A1 Tuna**  
limit 6  
**\$1<sup>19</sup>**

**Spam All Kinds**  
12 oz. LIMIT 12  
**\$1<sup>89</sup>**

**Sun Flower**  
Mackarel 15 oz.  
**\$1<sup>59</sup>**

**Beach Cliff Sardines**  
3.75 oz.  
**79¢**

**Coffee-Mate**  
Creamer 50 oz.  
**\$6<sup>99</sup>**

**Folgers Classic**  
Roast 39 oz.  
**\$7<sup>99</sup>**

**Ocean Best Crabmeat**  
Imitation 1 lb.  
**\$2<sup>49</sup>**

**Ox & Palm Corned**  
Beef 11.5 oz.  
LIMIT 6  
**\$2<sup>29</sup>**

**Golden State Vinegar**  
1 Gal.  
**\$2<sup>79</sup>**

**Campbells Chicken**  
Noodle Soup 10.7 oz.  
**89¢**

**Carnation Evaporated**  
Milk 12 oz.  
**99¢**

**Ground Beef**  
5 LBS. **\$9<sup>99</sup>**  
10 LBS. **\$16<sup>95</sup>**

**Pike & Pacific Mackarel**  
Family Bag  
**\$5<sup>95</sup>**

**Albers Corn Meal**  
20 oz.  
**\$1<sup>99</sup>**

**Cream of Mushroom**  
10 3/4 oz.  
**99¢**

**DM Beef Stew**  
15 oz.  
**2 FOR \$3<sup>00</sup>**

**One Whole Chicken**  
50 oz.  
**\$4<sup>99</sup>**

**Ace of Diamonds Tuna**  
LIMIT 12 Cans  
**\$1<sup>09</sup>**

**Gusto Ham**  
10 lbs.  
**\$16<sup>99</sup>**

**Miller Sausage**  
5 lbs.  
**\$14<sup>95</sup>**

**Chamorro Sausage Reg/Hot**  
1 lb.  
**\$3<sup>99</sup>**

**Black Label Luncheon Meat**  
12 oz.  
**\$1<sup>39</sup>**

**Libby's Vienna**  
Sausage 5 oz.  
**59¢**

**Hormel Chili**  
No Beans 15 oz.  
**2 FOR \$3<sup>00</sup>**

**Mary Kitchen Corned**  
Beef Hash 15 oz.  
**\$1<sup>79</sup>**

**Bar-S Bacon**  
1 lb.  
**\$2<sup>49</sup>**

**Bar-S Hotdog**  
1 lb.  
**\$1<sup>05</sup>**

**Bar-S Ham**  
10 lbs.  
**\$17<sup>99</sup>**

**Pauls Milk**  
1 Litre  
**\$16<sup>99</sup>**  
/CASE

**Real Fresh Milk**  
(Reg. & Low Fat)  
**\$17<sup>99</sup>**  
/CASE

**Vlasic Dill Pickles**  
(Spears) 1 Gal.  
**\$5<sup>99</sup>**

**Marca El Rey Chorizos**  
4 lb./64 oz.  
**\$21<sup>99</sup>**  
/CAN

**Peeled Shrimp**  
SC Brand 1 lb.  
**\$2<sup>99</sup>**

**Seafood Mix Log**  
Feng Brand 1 lb.  
**\$2<sup>59</sup>**

**Blue Crab Section**  
Per Box  
**\$8<sup>95</sup>**

**Kikkoman**  
1.6 L.  
**\$3<sup>79</sup>**

**Lemon Powder**  
5.29 oz.  
**\$4<sup>99</sup>**

**Vegetable Oil**  
5 Gal. LIMIT 1  
**\$29<sup>99</sup>**

**Crisco Shortening**  
3 lbs.  
**\$4<sup>99</sup>**

**Vega Shrimp**  
1 lb.  
**\$5<sup>99</sup>**

**Green Mussels**  
2 lbs.  
**\$4<sup>99</sup>**

**Milk Fish**  
**\$1<sup>59</sup>**

**Gold Medal Flour**  
5 lbs.  
**\$2<sup>59</sup>**

**Sugar**  
2 kg.  
**\$1<sup>49</sup>**

**Filma Cooking Oil**  
5 Litre  
**\$8<sup>99</sup>**

**Platinum Napkin**  
360 cnts.  
**\$3<sup>99</sup>**

**Tilapia**  
**\$9<sup>9¢</sup>**

**U.S. Extra Large Eggs**  
Dozen  
**\$2<sup>29</sup>**

**Chicken Wings**  
5.5 lbs.  
**\$9<sup>99</sup>**  
/PACK

**Korean Butane Gas**  
LIMIT 1 Case  
**\$22<sup>99</sup>**  
/CASE

**Morton Iodized**  
Salt 26 oz.  
**59¢**

**Foam Plates**  
125 ct.  
**\$6<sup>99</sup>**

**Cottonelle Single**  
24 rolls Tissue  
**\$8<sup>99</sup>**

**Kraft Cool Whip**  
8 oz. **\$1<sup>99</sup>**  
16 oz. **\$3<sup>50</sup>**

**Philadelphia Cream Cheese**  
3 lbs.  
**\$11<sup>99</sup>**

**Candle Plain**  
without picture  
**\$12<sup>95</sup>**  
/CASE

**Horse Shampoo**  
1 qt.  
**2 FOR \$3<sup>00</sup>**

**Diamond Foil**  
200 Sq. Ft.  
**\$5<sup>99</sup>**

**Enfamil**  
25.7  
**\$26<sup>99</sup>**

**Spoon & Fork No Brand**  
Name 100 cnts.  
**99¢**

**Shasta Drinks 112oz**  
All Flavor  
(warm only)  
**\$12<sup>99</sup>**  
/CASE

**Garlic**  
4 pcs./Bundle **\$7<sup>99</sup>**  
**Onion**  
4 pcs./Bundle **\$7<sup>99</sup>**  
PER POUND

**SpringField Vegetable Oil**  
128 fl.oz. (1Gal)  
**\$8<sup>99</sup>**

**Crisco Pure Corn**  
Oil 1 Gal.  
**\$9<sup>99</sup>**

**Sunkist 1 Case Warm Only**  
**\$5<sup>99</sup>**

**Del Monte Fiesta 3062g**  
Fruit Cocktail  
**\$4<sup>99</sup>**

**Bounty 15 Rolls**  
**\$19<sup>99</sup>**

**Coke Regular**  
24/Case Warm Only  
**\$12<sup>99</sup>**

**Pepsi Regular**  
Warm Only  
**\$13<sup>99</sup>**  
/CASE

### NON-FOOD

**SOFT 'N GENTLE (12 ROLLS)** **\$4.50**  
**CHARMIN (24 ROLLS)** **\$8.99**  
**GAIN POWDER (120 LOADS)** **\$16.95**  
**GAIN LIQUID (300 OZ.)** **\$16.95**  
**GAIN LIQUID (200 OZ.) ORIGINAL ONLY** **\$11.95**  
**JOY ULTRA LEMON DISHWASHING LIQUID (90 OZ.)** **\$6.99**  
**SUAVE SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER (15 OZ.) 2 FOR \$3.00**

### FAMILY BAG SPECIAL

**BEEF SHANK** **\$10.95**  
**FLANK STEAK** **\$16.95**  
**PORK ADOBO** **\$10.95**  
**PORK CHOP** **\$11.95**  
**PORK BELLY** **\$11.95**  
**STEWING CHICKEN** **\$6.95**  
**TURKEY TAIL (FAMILY BAG)** **\$4.99**

**U.S. CHOICE BEEF SHORTRIBS** **\$13.99**  
**BEEF BACK RIBS** **\$7.95**  
**BEEF OXTAIL** **\$16.95**  
**BEEF STEW** **\$12.95**  
**RIBEYE STEAK** **\$17.95**  
**BEEF TOP ROUND STEAK** **\$14.95**  
**SMOKED HAM STEAK** **\$12.95**  
**PORK BUTT** **\$10.95**

**Budweiser / Budlight**  
24/Case Warm Only  
**\$24<sup>99</sup>**

**Chamorro Punch**  
1 Gal.  
**\$8<sup>99</sup>**



# Business

## GMAC receives \$5B in bailout funds



In this Dec. 23, 2008 file photo provided by GM worker Kim Clay, an unidentified employee watches as the last sport utility vehicle, a GMC Envoy, rolls down the assembly line the GM Moraine Assembly plant in Dayton, Ohio, during the final shift at the plant.

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—The Treasury Department said Monday that it will provide \$5 billion to GMAC Financial Services LLC, the ailing financing arm of General Motors Corp., from the \$700 billion bank rescue program.

The government will receive preferred shares that pay an 8 percent dividend and warrants to purchase additional shares in return for the money, the department said.

Treasury also said it will lend up to \$1 billion to General Motors so that the company can purchase

additional equity that GMAC is planning to offer as part of its effort to raise more capital.

The assistance is part of a larger government effort to aid the auto industry and is on top of the \$17.4 billion in loans the Bush administration agreed to provide to the industry Dec. 19, a Treasury Department official said.

Analysts had speculated that if GMAC didn't obtain financial help it would have to file for bankruptcy protection or shut down, which would be a serious blow to GM's own

chances for survival.

Last week, the Federal Reserve approved GMAC's application to become a bank holding company, which made it eligible to receive money from the financial rescue fund. The Fed's approval was contingent on GMAC raising additional capital.

Separately, GMAC said late Monday that it has accepted all the bonds tendered in a debt-for-equity swap that was also part of its capital-raising efforts. The company released few details about the results of the swap.

## Oil ends above \$40 as Middle East fighting rages

**HOUSTON (AP)**—Crude prices rose above \$40 a barrel Monday as Israel and Palestinian militants exchanged rocket fire and the death toll mounted in the oil-rich region.

Light trading contributed to market volatility in the final days of 2008, with price swings of close to \$5 a barrel.

Light, sweet crude for February delivery rose \$2.31 cents to settle at \$40.02 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, the first

time crude has ended the day above \$40 in a week. Nymex will be closed Thursday for the New Year's Day holiday.

Retail gasoline prices in the U.S. continued to fall and neared \$1.60 per gallon nationally Monday.

In the Middle East, Israel destroyed symbols of Hamas power on the third day of what the defense minister described Monday as a "war to the bitter end." The three-day death toll rose to at least 364

on Monday, with some 1,400 reported wounded. Israel launched its campaign, the deadliest against Palestinians in decades, on Saturday in retaliation for rocket fire aimed at civilians in southern Israeli towns.

Israel obliterated symbols of Hamas power, with missiles striking next to the Hamas premier's home, and devastating a security compound and a university building.

are having a particular impact on demand for U.S.-China air transportation. Data show year-over-year U.S.-China bookings declined dramatically after the close of the Summer Olympics, and advance bookings for March 2009 are down nearly 30 percent, according to Northwest's motion to the DOT.

### Dow Chemical may seek lower price for Rohm & Haas

**NEW YORK (AP)**—The collapse of a joint venture with a state-owned Kuwaiti company may make Dow Chemical less willing to pay the \$15.3 billion pricetag for Rohm & Haas it initially agreed to last summer as energy prices peaked. Kuwait's government backed out of the

deal with Dow late Sunday, calling the K-Dow Petrochemicals joint venture, "very risky" due to the global financial crisis and crude prices that have tumbled more than 70 percent since July. Midland, Mich.-based Dow had expected more than \$7 billion in pretax proceeds from the K-Dow deal. Dow would not comment Monday on the failure of the joint venture or negotiations with Rohm & Haas.

### Treasury provides financial support to 43 banks

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—The Treasury Department said Monday that it has provided \$1.9 billion to 43 banks as part of the government's \$700 billion financial rescue program. Buf-

## Kerkorian sells remaining 5 percent shares in Ford

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Billionaire investor Kirk Kerkorian has sold his remaining 5 percent stake in Ford Motor Co., according to his investment company, Tracinda Corp.

Kerkorian, 91, has unloaded his last 107 million shares—a 4.89 percent stake—ending his investment with the troubled Dearborn, Mich., automaker whose turnaround efforts he expressed confidence in earlier this year. Kerkorian's stake in Ford peaked in June, when he owned 6.49 percent after paying \$1 billion at an average share price of \$7.10. He began scaling back his ownership in October, selling shares at an average price of \$2.43 each, according to regulatory filings. That marked a loss of about two-thirds of his investment, or roughly \$650 million.

Ford spokesman Mark Truby declined to comment on Kerkorian's withdrawal and said the company "remains completely focused on execut-

ing our transformation plan."

Kerkorian first said in April he would raise his existing stake in Ford to 5.6 percent, offering a 13.3 percent premium over the share's existing price. The offer came just days after the automaker posted a surprise \$100 million first-quarter profit.

Kerkorian continued increasing his stake in June and met with Ford Chief Executive Alan Mulally and Executive Chairman Bill Ford to discuss the company's turnaround plan.

But the situation for the auto industry has rapidly deteriorated since then. Last month, Ford posted a loss of \$129 million in the third quarter. Among Detroit's automakers, the company is considered the best positioned to weather the industry slump and has said it does not need federal loans to survive. Nonetheless, its sales have slumped and its stock has withered.



Kerkorian

## NY judge may weigh wider Madoff relief

**NEW YORK (AP)**—A judge presiding over civil claims filed against disgraced financier Bernard Madoff says he may be willing to consider extending relief from an investors' fund to those who invested in Madoff's business through third parties.

U.S. District Judge Louis L. Stanton told Daniel R. Goldenson and his wife in a letter dated Dec. 24 and made public Monday that their request to be eligible for relief

from the Securities Investor Protection Corporation comes "early in the large and complex procedures which are under way with respect to Madoff's affairs."

He said that before considering the issues involved in changing the terms of SIPC's coverage, he would need a formal application and briefing from SIPC, the Securities and Exchange Commission, a trustee for Madoff's business and representatives of investors.

## STOCK

### ASIAN MARKETS

	<b>AUSTRALIA</b> 3,591.500 Up 37.30 (1.05%)
	<b>HONG KONG</b> 14,485.27 Up 156.79 (1.09%)
	<b>JAKARTA</b> 1,359.262 Up 18.37 (1.37%)
	<b>TOKYO</b> 8,859.56 Up 112.39 (1.28%)
	<b>K. LUMPUR</b> 853.89 Up 7.42 (0.88%)
	<b>MANILA</b> 1,889.32 Down 23.94 (-1.25%)
	<b>SINGAPORE</b> 1,782.05 Up 1.48 (0.08%)
	<b>SEOUL</b> 1,132.66 Up 15.07 (1.35%)
	<b>BANGKOK</b> 444.52 Up 7.46 (1.71%)

### LEADING INDICATORS

**DOW**  
8,483.93  
-31.62

**NASDAQ**  
1,510.32  
-19.92

**S&P**  
869.42  
-3.38

### MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.4456
British Pound	0.6893
Canadian Dollar	1.2155
Chinese Renminbi	6.8518
Euro	0.7089
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7501
Indian Rupee	48.4650
Indonesian Rupiah	11,100.0000
Japanese Yen	90.2350
Malaysian Ringgit	3.4830
New Zealand Dollar	1.7179
Philippine Peso	47.4950
Singapore Dollar	1.4445
South Korean Won	1,258.9500
Swiss Franc	1.0530
Taiwan Dollar	32.8570
Thailand Baht	34.8750

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### Northwest seeks to delay some U.S.-China service

**ATLANTA (AP)**—Northwest Airlines, due to poor market conditions in light of the weakened global economy, is the latest carrier seeking to delay or cut back long-coveted U.S.-China service. The subsidiary of Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines Inc. said in a filing earlier this month with the Department of Transportation that it was seeking to delay proposed daily Seattle-Beijing service by a year from March 2009 to March 2010 and delay stop service by more than two months from March 25, 2009, to June 3, 2009. Northwest said the current economic problems that are affecting the global economy

falo, N.Y.-based M&T Bank Corp. received the most, getting \$600 million from the Treasury in return for preferred stock and warrants. Fulton Financial Corp., based in Lancaster, Pa., received \$376.5 million, the department said. The department previously announced that it was providing the money but did not reveal the recipients' names until late Monday. Some of the funds were granted to 20 privately held banks. A total of 34 private banks have now received funds from the financial rescue program.

### 3 private investors seek to purchase IndyMac

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—A trio of private investors—J.C. Flowers & Co., Dune Capital

Management and Paulson & Co.—have teamed up in an effort to buy failed thrift IndyMac, a person familiar with the deal said Monday. The two private-equity firms and hedge-fund Paulson have applied for a federal holding company charter, according to the person, who asked not to be named because the deal has not been completed. The investors want to convert IndyMac Federal Bank, which was seized by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. in July in the second-largest bank failure of the year, to a stock-held institution. A spokesman for Paulson & Co. declined to comment Monday. Representatives from J.C. Flowers & Co. and Dune Capital Management did not respond to requests for comment.



# Nation

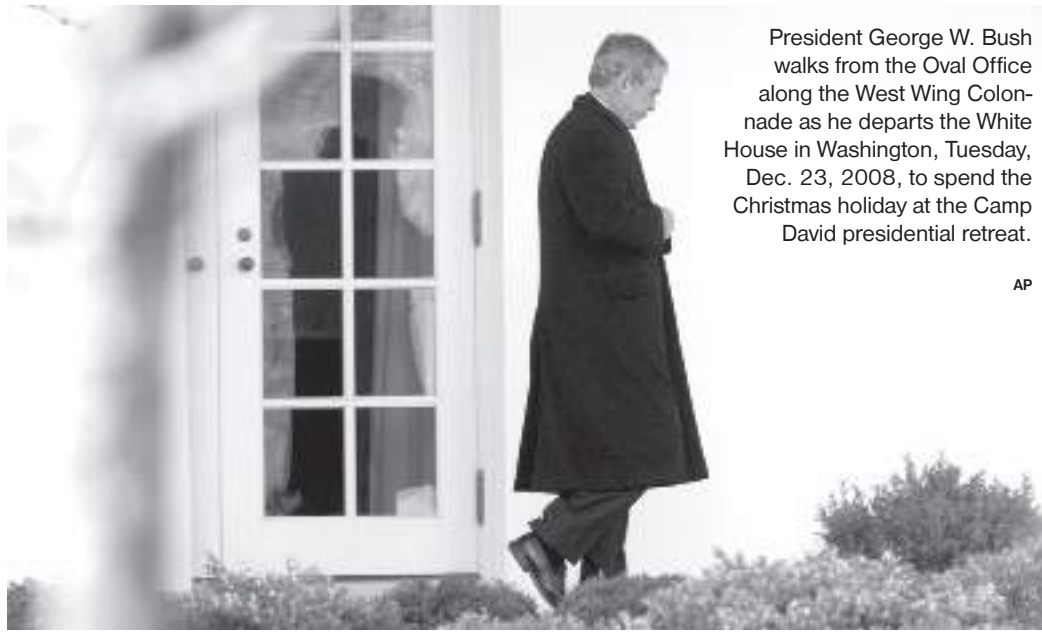
## Ex-aides say Bush never recovered from Katrina

WASHINGTON (AP)—Hurricane Katrina not only pulverized the Gulf Coast in 2005, it knocked the bully pulpit out from under President George W. Bush, according to two former advisers who spoke candidly about the political impact of the government's poor handling of the natural disaster.

"Katrina to me was the tipping point," said Matthew Dowd, Bush's pollster and chief strategist for the 2004 presidential campaign. "The president broke his bond with the public. Once that bond was broken, he no longer had the capacity to talk to the American public. State of the Union addresses? It didn't matter. Legislative initiatives? It didn't matter. P.R.? It didn't matter. Travel? It didn't matter."

Dan Bartlett, former White House communications director and later counselor to the president, said: "Politically, it was the final nail in the coffin."

Their comments are a part of an oral history of the Bush White House that Vanity Fair magazine compiled for its February issue, which hits newsstands in New York and Los Angeles on Wednesday, and nationally on



President George W. Bush walks from the Oval Office along the West Wing Colonnade as he departs the White House in Washington, Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2008, to spend the Christmas holiday at the Camp David presidential retreat.

AP

Jan. 6. Vanity Fair published comments by current and former government officials, foreign ministers, campaign strategists and numerous others on topics that included Iraq, the anthrax attacks, the economy and immigration.

Lawrence Wilkerson, top aide and later chief of staff to former Secretary of State Colin Powell, said that as a new president, Bush was like Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin,

the 2008 GOP vice presidential nominee whom critics said lacked knowledge about foreign affairs. When Bush first came into office, he was surrounded by experienced advisers like Vice President Dick Cheney and Powell, who Wilkerson said ended up playing damage control for the president.

"It allowed everybody to believe that this Sarah Palin-like president—because, let's face it,

that's what he was—was going to be protected by this national-security elite, tested in the cauldrons of fire," Wilkerson said, adding that he considered Cheney probably the "most astute, bureaucratic entrepreneur" he'd ever met.

"He became vice president well before George Bush picked him," Wilkerson said of Cheney. "And he began to manipulate

things from that point on, knowing that he was going to be able to convince this guy to pick him, knowing that he was then going to be able to wade into the vacuums that existed around George Bush—personality vacuum, character vacuum, details vacuum, experience vacuum."

On other topics, David Kuo, who served as deputy director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, disputed the idea that the Bush White House was dominated by religious conservatives and catered to the needs

of a religious right voting bloc.

"The reality in the White House is—if you look at the most senior staff—you're seeing people who aren't personally religious and have no particular affection for people who are religious-right leaders," Kuo said.

"In the political affairs shop in particular, you saw a lot of people who just rolled their eyes at ... basically every religious-right leader that was out there, because they just found them annoying and insufferable. These guys were pains in the butt who had to be accommodated."

## Blagojevich lawyer says impeachment not justified

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP)—Gov. Rod Blagojevich's lawyer said Monday that a vague array of charges and evidence doesn't merit removing the governor from office, and he urged a House committee not to recommend impeachment. Attorney Ed Genson complained bitterly that lawmakers were considering snippets of tape-recorded conversations that are quoted in a criminal complaint against the Democratic governor. He said no one knows the full context of those remarks or whether they are quoted accurately.

"We are fighting shadows, and that's not right," Genson said.

Monday's hearing was the first time Genson has comprehensively responded to the impeachment charges. Blagojevich was arrested by the FBI Dec. 9 on a variety of corruption charges, including scheming to benefit from naming President-elect Barack Obama's replacement in the U.S. Senate.

The governor denies any wrongdoing and has vowed to fight both impeachment and the criminal charges.

It was clear from the lawmak-

ers' questions that they had little sympathy for Blagojevich or for Genson's arguments.

At one point, Genson grew so frustrated that he pleaded for help.

"Isn't anyone here going to stand up for the governor, or is it going to be one (critic) after the other?" he asked. "This is the impartial panel?"

Meanwhile, federal prosecutors filed a motion Monday asking for court permission to release four of the Blagojevich conversations caught by wiretaps.

A judge will hear the mo-

tion next week. Genson said he hadn't seen the federal request and didn't know whether he would support the release of the recordings.

Genson told the committee that the quotes from the federal complaint reveal talk but no action. They include the governor talking, sometimes using foul language, about how to benefit from appointing a senator, withholding state money from a children's hospital unless he got a political donation, and pressuring the Chicago Tribune to fire editorial writers.

## Caroline Kennedy draws criticism after latest tour

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—Caroline Kennedy's latest trip under the spotlight as a Senate hopeful didn't get much better reviews than her first. A New York Daily News columnist said "the wheels of the bandwagon are coming off." New York Post state editor Fred Dicker already put her on his list of 2008 losers. And The New York Times said "she seemed less like a candidate than an idea of one: eloquent but vague, largely undefined and seemingly determined to remain that way."

On Friday after weeks of silence, Kennedy agreed to sit down for interviews with The Associated Press and New York City cable TV's NY1. Over the weekend, she scheduled another round of interviews with other news organizations from the Times to the Buffalo News. The New York Daily News noted

she frequently used the phrases "you know" and "um" during the interview, which was skewered in political blogs Monday.

"There has been some very rough comments," said Lee Miringoff, director of the Marist College poll. "I have been surprised," he said. "The welcome mat has not been out from everybody."

Kennedy spokesman Stefan Friedman didn't respond to requests for comment Monday.

It's been three weeks since Kennedy said she was interested in the seat expected to be vacated by Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, who is President-elect Barack Obama's choice for secretary of state.

Two weeks ago, she took a quick upstate tour to talk to mayors but barely spoke to the media.

## Family of missing cruise woman believes she jumped

MIAMI (AP)—The family of a missing cruise ship passenger said Monday that they suspect the woman "chose an unfortunate ending to her life" and jumped from a cruise ship balcony into the waters off Mexico's coast on Christmas night. The U.S. Coast Guard suspended its search Monday for Jennifer Ellis Seitz, a Florida journalist, after combing more than 4,200 square miles off the coast of the popular resort area of Cancun, where the ship had just visited. Mexican authorities said they would continue their search for another 48 hours.

Seitz had "previous emotional issues," yet there were no outward signs of distress while on the seven-night cruise from Miami, her family said in a statement given to one of her former employers, The News Chief in Winter Haven. Seitz's

mother joined her daughter and son-in-law on the cruise.

"Jennifer was in a very happy and uplifted mood both before and during the cruise," the Ellis family said in the statement. "She was excited about starting a new job and her future career with a local newspaper. She and her husband had been talking about starting their family. The family suspects that Jennifer chose an unfortunate ending to her life. She was a beautiful and caring person and will be truly missed by all who love her."

Seitz and her husband, Raymond, were celebrating their one-year anniversary on the Norwegian Pearl cruise ship.

Asurveillance camera showed someone falling overboard at 8 p.m. Christmas night, authorities said. About eight hours later, Raymond Seitz reported his wife missing.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### Palin's daughter gives birth to son named Tripp



ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—The 18-year-old daughter of former Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin has given birth in Alaska to a son. People magazine reports that Bristol Palin gave birth to Tripp Easton Mitchell Johnston on Sunday. He weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces. Relative Colleen Jones tells the magazine the baby is fine and Bristol is "doing well." Jones is the sister of Bristol's grandmother. The father is Levi Johnston, a former hockey player at Alaska's Wasilla High School. He has said he and Bristol plan to marry. Palin created a stir in September by announcing the pregnancy as she prepared to accept her nomination at the Republican National Convention. The governor's office called the birth a private family matter.

#### Well water near Tenn. spill may be unsafe

KINGSTON, Tenn. (AP)—Some water samples near a massive spill of coal ash in eastern Tennessee are showing high levels of arsenic, and state and federal officials on Monday cautioned residents who use private wells or springs to stop drinking the water. Samples taken near the spill slightly exceed drinking water standards for toxic substances, and arsenic in one sample was higher than the maximum level allowed for drinking water, according to a news release from the Tennessee Valley Authority, which operates the power plant where the spill occurred, the Environmental Protection Agency and other officials. TVA spokesman Jim Allen said there are four private drinking water wells in the area affected by the spill and the agency should have tests from them this week. "I think they were beyond the actual slide point of the material," EPA spokeswoman Laura Niles said of the wells. "There shouldn't be direct impact, but that's why they are sampling."

#### Explosion at Arizona grain silo burns 3 workers

MARICOPA, Ariz. (AP)—Three workers are being treated for burns after corn dust exploded at a silo south of Phoenix. Maricopa police Sgt. Stephen Judd says employees were offloading corn dust into a pit Monday morning when the blast occurred. The three injured workers have been taken by helicopter to a hospital burn unit with first- and second-degree burns, mostly to their faces, arms, and hands. Judd says one worker was in critical condition Monday afternoon and the others were in good condition. Judd says a welder had been doing routine maintenance work on the elevator a few minutes before the explosion. He says it's unclear whether that had anything to do with the explosion, which was so powerful it tore steel anchoring rods out of concrete.

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# Asia

## Pro-Thaksin protesters ring Thai Parliament

**BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)**—Thailand's government, beset by months of virtual paralysis, was again at a standstill Tuesday as thousands of demonstrators loyal to exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra surrounded Parliament.

The protesters, vowing to stay until their demands for general elections are met, prevented the new government from delivering a mandated speech Monday outlining its key policies. The government said it would again try to peacefully end the blockade and present the policy statement Tuesday.

The standoff comes less than a month after the last government was forced from office following demonstrations that

culminated in the eight-day seizure of Bangkok's two main airports. The earlier protesters had been part of an anti-Thaksin alliance.

The latest demonstration was peaceful except for a brief scuffle between protesters and police Tuesday, but analysts say the continuing upheavals will further batter Thailand's virtually moribund tourist industry and other economic sectors.

"We will keep negotiating and mediating," Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva told supporters. "I beg everyone, including all the lawmakers and officials, to dedicate our (New Year) holiday for the country in order to move our country forward."

The third prime minister in

four months, Abhisit was appointed in what many hoped would be the end of months of turbulent, sometimes violent, protests. His party had been in the opposition since 2001.

His speech is expected to include details of a 300 billion baht (\$8.6 billion) spending plan meant to jump-start the country's ailing economy and tourism, the no. 1 foreign exchange earner.

"There's no confidence among tourists who want to visit Thailand," said Prakrit Chinamouphong, president of the Thai Hotel Association. "I just want to see the peaceful country without demonstrations so that the tourists will come back to Thailand again."

## Pakistan army: We must 'avoid conflict' with India

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)**—Pakistan's army chief stressed Monday the need to avoid conflict with India, days after he ordered troops toward the rivals' shared border amid tensions following last month's terror attacks on Mumbai.

Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani made the remarks to a top Chinese diplomat who was visiting Islamabad to try and ease the situation between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India.

Kayani's remarks were be-

lieved to be his first about the tensions with Pakistan's traditional rival and could help reassure a jittery region that the country does not intend to escalate the crisis further.

On Friday, Pakistani intelligence officials said thousands of troops were being shifted toward the Indian border, though there has been no sign yet of a major build up at the frontier.

Without referring specifically to the situation, Kayani told Chinese Vice Foreign Minister

He Yafei of the "need to de-escalate and avoid conflict in the interest of peace and security," a brief army statement said.

India blames Pakistani militants for the slaughter of 164 people in its commercial capital and has not ruled out the use of force in its response. Pakistan's civilian leaders have said they do not want war, but will retaliate if attacked.

China is an important Pakistani ally and neighbors it and India.

## Taiwan court sends former president back to jail

**TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)**—A Taiwan court ordered former President Chen Shui-bian returned to jail Tuesday pending trial on corruption charges, accepting prosecutors' arguments that he be locked up to prevent him fleeing or colluding with alleged coconspirators.

The court's move reversed its previous ruling that Chen could remain free while preparations for his trial go forward. It followed a judicial decision last week to change the judges presiding over Chen's case.

In a statement Tuesday the Taipei District Court said Chen's detention was necessary for his

trial to go smoothly.

"Out of concerns for human rights and the public interest, Chen Shui-bian should be detained but he should also be allowed to receive visitors," the statement said.

Chen, an ardent supporter of Taiwan's formal independence from rival China, has denied any wrongdoing and says he is being persecuted by his successor, President Ma Ying-jeou, who came to power in May and has sought warmer ties with the mainland.

Chen was taken back to Tucheng detention center in suburban Taipei early Tuesday, fol-

lowing a 12-hour court hearing. He spent 31 days in Tucheng after his arrest Nov. 12. During that time he was only allowed to see his lawyers.

Chen was indicted earlier this month on charges of embezzling a presidential fund and accepting bribes during his eight years in office.

Prosecutors say Chen and his wife together embezzled 104 million New Taiwan dollars (\$3.12 million) from a special presidential fund, and received bribes of \$11.73 million in connection with a government land procurement deal and a separate construction project.

tended a concert by North Korea's state orchestra, state media said, the latest official report to portray the reclusive leader as healthy amid speculation he suffered a stroke in August. The official Korean Central News Agency said Monday that when Kim appeared in the auditorium, "the whole audience broke into the rousing cheers of 'hurrah!' and enthusiastically welcomed him." It did not say when the performance by the State Symphony Orchestra took place. The North's state media have stepped up a campaign apparently aimed at projecting an image of Kim as healthy and active. South Korea's Unification Ministry said later Monday that the North's media has reported about Kim's public appearances 97 times this year, a figure that is similar to previous years. The ministry, however, said it would not comment on the status of Kim's health condition. Over the past few months, the totalitarian leader's activities have included trips to a soccer match, a military unit, a steel plant, a soap factory, and chicken farms.

# World



Three Palestinian children from the Balosha family, of five who were all killed in the same Israeli missile strike, are seen in the morgue before their burial at Kamal Edwan hospital in Beit Lahiya, northern Gaza Strip, Monday, Dec. 29, 2008.

## Defiant Hamas hits Israel with dozens of rockets

**GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)**—Palestinian militants sent a deadly barrage of missiles flying deep into Israel on Monday, demonstrating that Hamas still had firepower three days into Israel's punishing air offensive in Gaza. Three Israelis were killed and two seriously wounded. Palestinian health officials put the three-day death toll in Gaza at 364; the U.N. said the total included at least 62 civilians.

In Monday's attacks, Israel focused its bombing on the houses of Hamas field operatives in a

campaign meant to tear at the roots of the extremist group ruling Gaza. Israel's defense minister promised a "war to the bitter end against Hamas" and allied militants. Intensified rocket strikes by Gaza militants, which triggered the Israeli offensive, have revealed the expanding range of missiles that are making larger cities farther inside Israel vulnerable.

In a barrage Monday night, a missile crashed into a bus stop in Ashdod, 23 miles from the Gaza Strip. A woman died and

two others were wounded, one seriously—the first casualties in the city of 190,000 residents.

Another Israeli was killed and one seriously wounded by a rocket strike in the Negev desert community of Nahal Oz, closer to the Gaza border. Earlier, a missile killed a construction worker in the city of Ashkelon. In all, four Israelis were dead since the Gaza offensive began Saturday, bringing to 19 the number of people killed in attacks from Gaza since the beginning of the year.

## Witnesses report massacre at church in Congo

**KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)**—Attackers hacked to death scores of people who sought refuge at a Catholic church in remote eastern Congo the day after Christmas, officials and witnesses said Monday, and the Ugandan army and a rebel group accused each other of carrying out the massacre.

Survivors and witnesses said the killings occurred close to Congo's border with Sudan, near to where the armies of those two countries and Uganda began an offensive this month to root out

the rebel Lord's Resistance Army, according to Ugandan army spokesman Capt. Chris Magezi. A U.N. spokesman, Ivo Brandau, said 120 homes were set ablaze in the area and that thousands of people have fled for fear of further attacks.

The Lord's Resistance Army rebel group has waged one of Africa's longest and most brutal wars for the last two decades. In the past, aid and rights groups have accused the rebels of cutting off the lips of

civilians and forcing thousands of children to serve as soldiers or sex slaves. The conflict has spilled out of northern Uganda and into Sudan and Congo.

"The scene at the church was unbelievable. It was horrendous. On the floor were dead bodies of mostly women and children cut in pieces," Magezi told The Associated Press. He blamed the Lord's Resistance Army for the massacre and quoted witnesses as saying the rebels used machetes, clubs and swords in Friday's attack.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### Scenic Pakistani valley falls to Taliban militants

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)**—Taliban militants are beheading and burning their way through Pakistan's picturesque Swat Valley, and residents say the insurgents now control most of the mountainous region far from the lawless tribal areas where jihadists thrive. The deteriorating situation in the former tourist haven comes despite an army offensive that began in 2007 and an attempted peace deal. It is especially worrisome to Pakistani officials because the valley lies outside the areas where al-Qaida and Taliban militants have traditionally operated and where the military is staging a separate offensive. "You can't imagine how bad it is," said Muzaffar ul-Mulk, a federal lawmaker whose home in Swat was attacked by bomb-toting assailants in mid-December, weeks after he left. "It's worse day by day."

#### Report: NKorea's Kim cheered at concert appearance

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)**—Kim Jong Il at-

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Somali president quits amid international pressure

**MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)**—Somalia's president resigned Monday after a four-year term in which his Western-backed government failed to extend its power throughout a country crippled by infighting and a strengthening Islamic insurgency. Abdullahi Yusuf's resignation, which comes amid deepening international pressure, could usher in more chaos as Islamic militants scramble for power—even though the government controls only pockets of the capital, Mogadishu, and the seat of parliament in Baidoa. Within hours of the announcement, mortar shells slammed into the streets near the presidential palace in Mogadishu, where the government maintains a token presence. Somalia has been beset by two decades of anarchy, violence and an insurgency that has killed thousands of civilians and sent hundreds of thousands fleeing for their lives. "Most of the country is not in our hands," Yusuf said in a speech before parliament in Baidoa, referring to Islamic insurgents with alleged ties to al-Qaida.

#### Coup leaders seize cars from regime loyalist

**CONAKRY, Guinea (AP)**—Dozens of soldiers supporting last week's coup in Guinea forced their way into the compound of a close confidant of the country's late dictator Monday, the official said, in a show of force against a powerful figure in the previous regime. The heavily armed men burst through a gate and demanded that Mamadou Sylla hand over the keys to several SUVs allegedly stolen from the government, Sylla said. It was the second time the military junta has used intimidating force in dealing with key supporters of strongman Lansana Conte, whose death last week touched off the coup. The raid occurred just hours after the African Union froze Guinea's membership in the continentwide bloc, threatening further sanctions if the junta doesn't restore constitutional order. The AU said it was giving the coup leaders six months to restore constitutional rule. "We will not accept that the coup d'etat sticks in Guinea," said AU Chairman Patrick Sinyinza.



# Campus Life

## Va. schools' enrichment: Fiscal literacy

BY MICHAEL BIRNBAUM  
THE WASHINGTON POST

**W**ASHINGTON—As the economy spirals downward, Virginia schools are in the vanguard of a movement to teach children financial skills that might help them avoid problems their parents face.

Across the state, students are learning the difference between pre- and post-tax pay, and foreclosures' effects on property values. Advocates say the subject is gaining urgency.

"There's a tremendous need for more effective economic education at the K-through-12 level," said Joseph Peri, chief operating officer of the New York-based Council for Economic Education. "I would say that as a nation, we're slowly improving, but we're not doing it nearly fast enough."

Better education, Peri said, might have helped many homeowners avoid financial trouble. "A lot fewer people would have found themselves in situations where they didn't understand the mortgage they were signing up for," he said.

At Mark Twain Middle School in Fairfax County, eighth-graders are learning how to balance a checkbook, set a budget and differentiate between credit and debit cards. At Mercer Middle School in Loudoun County, they are playing the stock market, and one gung-ho student has read up on Warren Buffett to become the class investment guru.

"I wish I had learned this when I was their age," said Julie Carreiro, a math teacher at Twain, in the Alexandria section of Fairfax. "I got into some credit-card debt when I was in college."



Susan Helsley, center, has her eighth-graders at Mercer Middle School in Aldie, Va., "trade" stocks. Akshay Murthy, in striped shirt, high-fives Noah Simms after seeing one of their stocks rise. At left are Minh Tran and Sam Tate.

Although an in-depth financial education might have been unnecessary a generation ago, when most people spent their careers with one company and had guaranteed retirement pension plans, understanding finances has become critical. The new classroom efforts go far beyond teaching the values of nickels, dimes and pennies.

In Virginia, which since 2005 has had some of the strongest financial education standards in the country, students are required to understand various types of investments and savings.

They must study insurance policies and how taxes work. They even go through a simulated loan application process. The state lets school systems decide when and how to work the lessons into math and social studies classes in secondary schools, and there is no statewide test on the subject. But financial education advocates say the classes are making students better prepared than previous generations.

Carreiro's own financial education was typical: one semester of high school economics. But "it was all ab-

stract stuff, not personal finance," she said. In January, she and other teachers at Twain will take their students to a day-long Junior Achievement program. The organization helps teach job readiness and supports financial literacy. At the event, Twain eighth-graders will be assigned careers and obligations and will be asked to make financial decisions based on that information. They will put newfound skills to use.

Financial education experts say the subject merits in-depth treatment across several grades.

"To take a one-semester course in high school is just kind of scratching the surface," said Laura Levine, executive director of the JumpStart Coalition, a Washington-based financial education advocacy group. "Personal finance is not just one of these one-shot deals where you take a class and you're done."

Peri pointed to elementary programs in Mississippi and Georgia as models for financial education. Other educators say that it is especially important to teach young students about savings and frugality.

Some Virginia schools are teaching financial literacy in a hands-on fashion. Susan Helsley's gifted class at Mercer has been investing a virtual stock portfolio since the end of September.

"None of the old rules apply," Helsley said. "We're just flying along."

One recent morning, CNBC was on mute in the front of her classroom, a commentator energetically gesticulating as a stock ticker trailed across the bottom of the screen. Students peered into laptop computers, tracking their portfolios, which had been as hammered by the markets as their parents' 401(k) plans. Helsley taught them about diversified investments and other concepts and then let them decide what to do with their virtual \$100,000.

Nobody had emerged unscathed. The top group had \$91,000 that day, in part because it had kept a large position in cash.

If there is a "silver lining" to the economic downturn, Levine said, "it might be that people will place more importance on the need to educate our kids about money so they don't make the same mistakes adults have."

## Preparing for the SAT? A little humor could help

BY MITCHELL LANDSBERG  
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Talk about worlds colliding: Imagine what would happen if a Hollywood comedy writer started thinking up questions for the SAT.

Silly thought, right? Well, try these:

1. At a Saks Fifth Avenue store, Winona Ryder examines four distinct blouses, five distinct dresses, and two distinct handbags. How many different combinations of items can she shoplift if she takes exactly one blouse, two dresses and a handbag?

2. Yo mamma so \_\_\_\_\_, when you mail her a letter, you need two zip codes. A) diaphanous. B) luminous. C) ravenous. D) grisly. E.) corpulent. (Answers below.)

No, those questions have never appeared, would never appear, could never appear, on the SAT. For starters, Charles Horn would say, they aren't nearly boring enough. That is why Horn wrote them. A comedy writer whose work has appeared in the cartoon series "Robot Chicken," and on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," he saw an unfilled niche in the rapidly expanding and extremely lucrative test prep industry.

"In the real test," he said, "part of what makes it so hard is that it's sooo

boring." Students "can't even get into it, because they have to read it over and over and over again."

As an antidote, Horn wrote "The Laugh Out Loud Guide" to the SAT, subtitled, "Ace the SAT Exam without Boring Yourself to Sleep!"

At first blush, the idea of trying to find comedy in the extremely unfunny business of studying for the college entrance exam would appear to be a losing proposition. Horn has a three-word response: Comedy traffic school. "Research shows that comedy is actually effective in education," he said in an interview near his Los Angeles home. "It increases recall...it reduces stress...and it actually makes the subjects more interesting."

3. If Rosie O'Donnell can eat a 20-pound turkey in 12 minutes, how many minutes would it take her, at that rate, to eat a 30-pound ham? A) 8. B) 12. C) 16. D) 18. E) 20.

Horn, who described himself as being in his 30s, grew up in Canada, where students didn't routinely take the SAT. He said he eventually took the graduate school version, the GRE, and wound up earning a Ph.D. from Princeton before going to work as a software engineer for a small firm in the Silicon Valley. Beneath the engineer's facade, a comedy writer was lurking, and a

few years ago, he chucked a regular paycheck, moved to Los Angeles and tried his hand at making people laugh.

The result was the age-old Hollywood success story: Desperate for paying work, he needed a real job. He resorted to tutoring high school students for the SAT.

It was only a matter of time before he wrote a book combining the various threads of his careers.

So is it funny? The Los Angeles Times convened an expert panel: seven Los Angeles Fairfax High School seniors who have all studied for, and taken, the SAT.

Tough crowd. "It seems like a regular SAT, except it throws in a little kiddie joke," said Luigi Oliva, 17, after hearing one question selected from the book at random. "Immature," he concluded.

"They're funny in a kindergarten way," said classmate Melissa Umana, 18, "not for people who are taking the SAT."

Luigi, thumbing through the book, suddenly laughed. "Oh, this is funny," he said. He was reading:

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, Warren's hotness can be expressed as a times the square root of b, where a and b are positive integers and a is greater than b. If Warren's hotness is equal to 2

times the square root of 12, what is the value of a minus b? A) -10. B) -1 C) 0 D) 1 E) 10.

The students began to re-evaluate. "I wouldn't mind using the book," decided Jeanette Becerril, 17, "because even though it's a little immature, the test is so serious and so stressful that ... when you use a book like this, it calms you down a little bit."

Norma Hernandez, 17, spoke up. "I think you'll remember something like this better than something that's like everything else," she said.

Still, the students had quibbles. Once you get past the jokey setups, they concluded, math is math. But English is another matter. Luigi read aloud an essay that begins: "Ladies and Gentlemen, today we have lost a most righteous and gnarly dude, taken from us way too soon. The Toddmeister is, simply put, the most heinous, (expletive), wicked-cool person on the face of the planet."

Melissa laughed, but said: "That's not going to be on the SAT, for sure. This is about some dude who parties. How's that going to help me?"

Fair enough, Horn said, when told of the students' reaction. In fact, his book contains a disclaimer that says: "What are the chances that you'll see a sentence about the Toddmeister on

the real SAT exam? Pretty much zero."

But, it says, the writing portions of the book still give students the opportunity to practice on humorous material—parts of which do have more challenging vocabulary, and contain common errors that test-takers will be asked to spot. Then, it says, they'll be ready for the real, "retardedly boring" thing.

For the record, College Board spokeswoman Alana Klein took a pass when asked if she found her company's test to be "retardedly boring." "Do you think it is?" she asked. "I'm not sure I even know what that means."

She added that the official policy of the College Board is that "the best way to get ready for the SAT is for kids to take a rigorous curriculum in high school...and essentially just be a good student. ...That's our stance." They're sticking to it. The College Board does publish its own test prep manual, which definitely doesn't include questions like:

5. After a \_\_\_\_\_ investigation, the inspector \_\_\_\_\_ that faulty wiring was fo' shizzle the cause of the fire that burned down Snoop Dogg's hizzhouse. A) lengthy, realized. B) complete, prognosticated. C) cursory, ruled. D) thorough, determined. E) copious, charged.

Answers. 1. 80. 2. E. 3. D. 4. D. 5. D.



# Life & Style

**ELIZABETH, N.J.** (AP)—“H-26,” the guard yelled. “You have a visitor.”

Locked in a windowless warehouse for three months, Ibrahim Cisse had long given up hope of anyone finding him. Now, his mind raced. How could he possibly have a visitor when no one in this country knew his name?

Nervously, he shuffled into the visitors room.

There, behind the glass partition, was a small woman with short brown hair and kind green eyes. Cisse stared at her suspiciously as he picked up the phone.

My name is Janet, she said, speaking in a soft voice in French. “I came as a friend.”

Cisse’s heart warmed at the sound of his own language. Still, he was cautious.

So many terrible things had happened since he had fled a gunfight on the streets of Abidjan and stowed away on a boat filled with crates of chocolate and cocoa. In America he was slapped in shackles, yelled at like a criminal, locked in jail first and then sent to this prison-like detention center. Here, days passed in a mind-numbing blur with little to do but lie on his bunk and ponder an unimaginable future.

An immigration judge had ordered him deported, but because he had no passport or papers, the Ivory Coast refused to take him back. Cisse was a man without a country, without hope, without contact with the outside world.

Gently, Janet Curley coaxed him. How could she help? What did he need?

He wanted to learn English so that he could understand what was happening. He wanted to find out about his family in Africa. Most of all, he wanted to be free.

I will teach you English, she said.

The next Saturday she arrived with alphabet letters and words and pictures. Over the static-filled phone connection, Cisse had his first English lesson. He learned how to say “pineapple.”

And so began an extraordinary journey, a friendship forged in the unlikelyst of settings, through a grubby glass partition in the visitors room of a detention center where 300 immigrants—none of whom are charged with a crime—are imprisoned.

Cisse, 27, spent 16 months in detention before being released on parole. Today, he calls the 49-year-old court clerk “Momma.” She loves him like her own family.

In those weekly visits, Cisse says, Janet made me feel like a human being again.

■ ■ ■ ■

In a searing, first-person account, Fauziya Kassindja, a Togolese teenager who applied for asylum to escape female genital mutilation, described her 14 months in detention at Elizabeth. The terrible isolation and uncertainty, she wrote, was made even more unbearable by the fact that no one came to visit.

Her 1998 book, “Do They Hear You When You Cry,” so

disturbed a group of congregants at the Riverside Church in Manhattan that they decided to take action. They would visit detainees who had no other visitors. They would listen to their cries.

And so, on Saturdays and Tuesdays, a small band of people climb into a church van and drive 15 miles to Elizabeth. They come from all backgrounds: social workers, professors, students, doctors, nurses, an engineer, a court clerk. Their mission is simple: just show up, to be a friendly

what to do with them.

Some have fled persecution in their country and applied for asylum after landing at a U.S. airport. Others were rounded up in raids because of problems with their paperwork or because they had no paperwork. Some were caught at the border.

Their numbers have soared in recent years in the wake of tougher immigration laws, an intense new focus on deportation and a reorganization of the system after Sept. 11, 2001. About

woman Pat Reilly says. “Of course there are lots of compelling stories, but a judge has to make a decision based on the law.”

But critics question why conditions have to be so harsh.

Detainees wear dark blue prison uniforms. They are addressed by numbers, not their names. Men and women are segregated and even spouses are allowed no physical contact, just two phone conversations a week. There is no outdoor yard at Elizabeth, nor any windows,

many, this is the most alien experience imaginable.

“When I saw my visitor every week,” Cisse says. “It was the only time I felt happy.”

■ ■ ■ ■

Mary Schoen’s Roosevelt Island apartment is a tranquil place filled with books and pictures. There are sweeping views of the East River. A pot of spicy lamb stew simmers on the stove.

For Rwandans Jean-Bosco Ndayishimiye, 47, and his wife, Murekatete, this is the

ankle bracelets in December 2007, it was Schoen who picked them up and brought them to her home. Their release had followed a chaotic few days during which the couple were almost deported after being denied asylum. Steglich managed to get a last-minute reprieve, pending an appeal to a federal court.

While the couple are grateful for their freedom, they are still haunted by their incarceration. “We were treated like we were not human beings,” Murekatete says, sobbing.

Their ordeal began after they arrived at Kennedy International Airport for a two-week vacation. An immigration officer informed them that their tourist visas had been canceled and they would have to return to Kigali. They were stunned by the news, and feared what would happen to them if they went back.

According to Ndayishimiye, when they objected, they were handcuffed and taken to Elizabeth, where they spent 15 months fighting deportation as her health deteriorated and his anger grew.

“They wouldn’t even let me wear my own underwear,” he says.

They had a good life in Rwanda, the couple say. He worked as a clerk for the American Embassy and she ran a small clothing store. Their children were doing well at school. But he had been involved in a bitter court dispute over property with relatives, one of whom is a high-ranking police official. Ndayishimiye says he fears for his life if he returns.

Murekatete has delicate features and a quiet, elegant presence. In detention, she says, she suffered from heart problems and headaches and there were times she wept so hard she thought she would die. She ached for her children, her husband, for warmth, for decent food. Steglich worried about the toll prolonged imprisonment was taking on her client.

For seven months the couple lived in Schoen’s apartment while she helped them navigate their new life, find jobs, enroll in English classes, and find a rental room of their own. Now Ndayishimiye works in a commercial warehouse and Murekatete works as a home health aide.

Even if they win asylum, which would mean their children could join them, Ndayishimiye worries about the difficulties of starting a new life “from zero,” as he says.

Schoen listens from the kitchen as she prepares dinner. She knows how hard it will also be on her if they are deported.

She has seen detainees disappear before—the 26-year-old Ethiopian woman who languished for two years only to be deported, the 50-year-old teacher from Burma who, knowing she was about to be sent back, pressed her hands and face against the glass and wailed “pray for me, pray for me,” as tears flowed down her face.

**See SOJOURNERS on next page**



Janet Curley, 49, right, sits in Saint Nicholas Park in Harlem Sunday, Nov. 23, 2008, with Lassina Konate, 30, and Ibrahim Cisse, 27, left.

AP

## Sojourners are there for Immigration detainees

By HELEN O'NEILL  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

face for an hour and make a commitment to be a real friend.

They call themselves Sojourners. In 10 years of visits they have transformed some detainee lives—but many say their own lives have been transformed as well.

“We try to bring some humanity into a place that is so dehumanizing,” Curley says.

It is not an easy task.

The detention center is housed in a brown brick building on a bleak industrial stretch near Newark airport, a place studded with tire shops, warehouses, a strip club and a diner. Outside an American flag flutters next to a red one stamped CCA, for Corrections Corporation of America, the private prison contractor that runs the center. Inside, immigrants are detained indefinitely—some for months and years while the government decides

350,000 people are now deported annually, up from about 100,000 in the years before 2001. Most spend time in detention.

“Why was I locked up when I had not committed a crime?” cries Speciose Murekatete, a 40-year-old Rwandan who, with her husband, spent a year and a half in Elizabeth. “Why could I not hug my husband for more than a year? Why could I get no fresh air? Why could I not see the sun? Why could I not wear my own clothes?”

Immigration officials refuse to directly answer these questions. But they defend detention as a necessary program, one designed to protect the country from undesirables and terrorists and to protect the detainees as well.

“Our mission is to detain and remove as many illegal aliens as possible, and it is done in a highly humane manner,” ICE spokes-

just an open skylight in the roof of the room they use for one hour of daily recreation. Detainees have no right to a lawyer, though legal aid firms offer their services pro bono.

Some detainees become so disheartened they ask for voluntary deportation back to the country from which they have fled. The government usually quickly obliges. ICE leases a fleet of 10 airplanes for deportation purposes.

“You lose your identity,” says Pradeep Thapa, a 36-year-old writer from Nepal, who was detained for 16 months. “You begin to feel like you don’t really exist, that maybe the life you had before never really existed either.”

About 35,000 are living this alternative reality in a patchwork of detention centers and prisons all over the country. Aliens, they are called, and for

one place they can take a break from their nightmare. Their three children, ages 7, 8 and 12, smile from a framed photograph on the bookcase.

Schoen is a sunny woman with fair hair and twinkling eyes. The 50-year-old nurse practitioner began visiting the couple in Elizabeth shortly after they were detained in September 2006. Today Schoen and her 20-year-old daughter count them as close friends.

Ndayishimiye and Murekatete call her their guardian angel.

For Schoen did far more than simply visit. She gave them money for phone cards so the couple could call their children; brought pictures and news from Rwanda; worked with a pro-bono lawyer, Elissa Steglich of the American Friend Service Committee.

And when the couple were finally released with electronic



"It was like watching her drown," Schoen says.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
To receive asylum, immigrants must prove that they have been persecuted or have a "credible fear" of future persecution on the basis of race, nationality, religion, political opinion or a membership in a particular social group.

Immigration judges, who decide their cases in closed courts, are rigid about interpretations. Couples like Ndayishimiye and Murekatete, for example, do not easily fall into one of the specific categories. Men like Cisse and his friend, Lassina Konate, 30, who also stowed away on a boat from the Ivory Coast, have no papers and were illiterate when they arrived; they are in an impossibly difficult position unless they can somehow find a lawyer.

Even lawyers for detainees face enormous challenges. They cannot call their clients directly, scheduling meetings is practically impossible, many of their clients need interpreters, and detainees can be abruptly transferred without any notice.

"What is happening is unjust and inhumane," Steglich says. "We are talking life and death cases, where people have fled intense suffering, where families are often torn apart. A judge's decision can have dire consequences. These people should have an absolute right to counsel."

Nationwide, immigration judges granted asylum to about 37 percent of 35,775 applicants in 2007, according to the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Human rights groups argue that jailing detainees amounts to criminalizing them. They condemn the limited right of detainees to appeal their incarceration, the lack of accountability at many centers and the psychological sufferings of those detained indefinitely.

Many also criticize the profits earned by the private companies that run detention centers. ICE has an annual budget of nearly \$5 billion. ICE officials say it costs about \$175 a day to detain someone at Elizabeth. They refused to say how much ICE pays CCA.

Profits are also reaped in smaller ways. Detainees must purchase phone cards, snacks and other small items within the system, some at prices higher than they cost outside. Detainees who work—in the kitchen or laundry of facilities—earn just \$1 a day.

ICE spokeswoman Reilly said the average length of stay is a month. Those who remain longer, she said, make their own choice to do so while they appeal deportation orders.

She has little sympathy for detainees who have entered the country illegally—a misdemeanor—even if they have lived here for years. "They broke the law," she says. "When people disregard that law, what other laws will they disregard?"

■ ■ ■ ■ ■  
"Today my heart screams for hope..."

The hope of waking up one day free of bars and chains...

The hope of waking up, only

to find that everything that has happened to me would only be a dream ..."

In a basement room at the Riverside Church, David Fraccaro's voice cracks as he reads the poem



A pod housing surveillance cameras is seen Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2008, on the ceiling of the medical treatment center at the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) detention center in Elizabeth, N.J. Inside CCA, immigrants are detained indefinitely, some for months and years, while the government decides what to do with them.

and recalls the 18-year-old asylum seeker from Colombia who wrote it. Her name was Claudia and for eight months Fraccaro visited her in Elizabeth.

Then, because of overcrowding, she was moved to a local jail. There, Fraccaro says, he witnessed her deterioration from a beautiful, spunky young woman to a defeated, depressed inmate who didn't care what happened. Eventually, she was deported.

Fraccaro, 31, has been visiting detention centers for eight years now. When he first stumbled on the Sojourner program at coffee hour after Sunday service, the fair-haired, square-jawed actor from Paradise, Ind. had just lost a major audition and was questioning everything about his life and career.

He knew nothing about asylum seekers or detention centers. And then he went on his first Sojourner visit—to the former Wackenhut detention center near Kennedy airport in Queens.

"They brought out this very skinny and tired looking African man right around my own age," Fraccaro recalls. "His lips were cracked and his eyes were sunken with lack of sleep and his hands were shaking."

Fraccaro had to bend down to speak into the small, wire-covered hole in the partition; there were no phones. He remembers the smell of the man's breath, his fear. The man, a fisherman from the Ivory Coast, was named Charles. "Please help me," he said.

Overwhelmed by disgust and helplessness, Fraccaro knew he had to do more than just visit. He went back to college, got a degree in theology and is now studying human rights at Columbia University. He became a minister. And he became coordinator of the Sojourner program.

On this fall evening Fraccaro is speaking at a training session for about 20 new members. He tells them about Claudia and Charles

and the Tibetan woman who screamed and fought so hard at the airport that guards couldn't put her on the plane, so they returned her to Elizabeth and placed her in solitary confinement for 10

days. When she was finally released, Fraccaro said, she had two narrow channels etched into her cheeks from tears.

The group listens quietly, some shaking their heads.

At the detention center, he tells them, their mission is purely friendship. They are not visiting as social workers, advocates or legal advisers. He warns them that sometimes they will go and their friend will not be there, and they may be given no explanation.

And he invites them to a rally outside the detention center a few weeks later.

There, as families huddle and weep and protesters brandish signs saying "Asylum is not a Crime," Fraccaro joins with others in reciting the names of the detainees who are locked inside.

At one point a speaker steps up to the microphone and gazes up at the grim brick building.

"Mr. President," he cries, as the crowd roars, "tear down this wall."

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The visitors room is a soulless place where stark white lights beam down on the glass partition that separates the imprisoned from the free. In one corner a man tries to comfort a woman sobbing behind the glass. In another a mother holds a baby girl up to the partition so she can press her lips against it and kiss her father on the other side.

On a recent Saturday, Fraccaro visits with a 20-year-old man from the Ivory Coast, an asylum-seeker who has been detained for seven months. They chat about soccer and politics, but depression and monotony have worn the man down.

"It is very hard," he says, head downcast.

After an hour, a guard yells "Golf-26. Your time is up." Fraccaro presses his hand against the glass and the man presses his. Then he shuffles back to his dorm.

One booth over, Sojourner Stephanie Crane, a 21-year-old Fordham University student, chats with a 19-year-old high school student from Trenton, N.J., who was picked up in a

Crane has been visiting him for months and she senses a change—a weariness of spirit that hurts to watch. "It makes me so angry," she says. "He hasn't done anything wrong."

In some ways, the ordeal of detention is worse for those who have already sampled life in America than for those who are locked up as soon as they arrive. But being released brings its own challenges.

Cisse—the young man from the Ivory Coast—recalls the day he stepped out of the Elizabeth facility, having just been flown back from an Alabama prison, where he spent six weeks because the New Jersey facility needed his bed.

It was a warm September night in 2006 and Janet Curley was waiting.

He remembers how the lights of the city glowed as they drove over the George Washington bridge, how welcoming they seemed. And he remembers Curley's caution. New York is a big exciting place, she told him. Sometimes it is good. And sometimes it is hard.

It is a sunny fall day and Cisse is sitting in a downtown Manhattan restaurant with Curley and Konate sipping tea. Even now, after two years of freedom, the men marvel at their fortune. They can read and write English now. They can take the subway without getting lost. They can ask a police officer for help without feeling frightened.

And yet life is not easy. They work for minimum wage—Cisse in a warehouse and

Konate as a dishwasher—and have a hard time making ends meet. They don't know what has become of their families or what will become of them.

Una Tapper, a 76-year-old retired lawyer who was once an administrative law judge for the state of New York, is working on their behalf. Tapper, a former Sojourner, is trying to get a new hearing before an immigration judge on the grounds that the first one—in which they had no representation, couldn't speak English and didn't understand the proceedings—was unfair. She has medical reports from Doctors without Borders, which, she says are consistent with their stories of being beaten by soldiers. But there is still a possibility that they will be returned to detention or deported.

The prospect haunts Curley, even as she marvels at their fortitude.

"They are such respectful, kind, hardworking, prayerful men," she says. "We should be welcoming immigrants like this into our country, not punishing them."

Curley tells them that they have seen the worst of America, and she apologizes for that.

No, they say, smiling. They have seen the best of America.

Because in their darkest moment, when they lay on their bunks in the detention center despairing that even God had forgotten them, a miracle happened. A stranger walked into their lives. She would lift their hearts with her weekly visits.

And she would become their great champion and friend.

## Memorias Guinaiya para I la Defunto: Felix (Leling) Masga Mendiola

Julio Dia 17, 1950 - Decembre Dia 24, 2008

**Lahen:** †Felipe Camacho yan †Joaquina Masga Mendiola

**Yetnun:** †Zacharias Muna yan †Natividad Fejeran Tudela

**Asaguan:** Lourdes Fejeran Tudela Mendiola

**Tatan:** Alvin T. (Marleen S.) Mendiola, Janice M. (Joseph C.) Muna, Kahili SanNicolas, Jaclyn T. Mendiola, (John De Leon Guerrero), Adrian T. (Tanya P.) Mendiola, Janilyn T. Mendiola

**Geulon:** Matua, Louanne, Leisha, Kayline, Monique, Isabela, EJ, AJ, Zachery, Damien, Kaeddie

**Che'lun:** †Francisco M. Cabrera, Balbina M. (Ignacio) Perez, Fermina M. (Luis S.) Camacho, James M. Mendiola (Thomasa Palacios), Rosie M. (†Russell A.) Long, Florine M. (†John U.) Hofschneider, Martina M. (Thomas) Morgan, Rufino M. Mendiola (Bencilin John), Felipe M. (Kathy G.) Mendiola, Thomas M. (Marilyn L.) Mendiola, †David M. (†Victoria K.) Mendiola, Joseph M. (Carleen P.) Mendiola, Juanita M. Mendiola

**Kiñadun:** Santiago F. (Bertha C.) Tudela, Augustine F. (Connie) Tudela, Samuel F. (Annette S.) Tudela, Patricio F. (Carmen D.) Tudela, Dorothea T. (Benjamin) Seman, Joe F. (Frances C.) Tudela, Joaquin F. (Edith C.) Tudela, Rosalina T. (Joseph) Gabutin, Thomas F. (Nikonika DLG.) Tudela, Elaine F. Tudela (Paul Sasamoto).

Ha didingo lorkue' siha nos kuantos na man tihaña, man tihuña, subrinuña yan subrinañasiha

I lisayüña matutucha kada puengi gi alas 7:00, guatu gi gima' niha Dandan, Saipan.  
Para hu malaknos I tatataña gi Inero Dia Dos, 2009 ya para hu ma koni' guatu gigima' yu'us  
San Vicente gi oran alas 8:00 gi ega'an. Para hu tinatiyi nai I misaña gialas 11:00 gi ega'an  
dispues I interuña guatu gi seminteyon Chalan Kanoa.



# Hollywood's happy, even without a record year



AP

In this image released by Warner Bros., Heath Ledger starring as The Joker, is shown in a scene from "The Dark Knight."

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hollywood loves breaking box-office records, yet studio executives aren't griping that their 2008 lineup will fall a bit shy of the all-time high set a year earlier.

With the overall economy in the pits, movie moguls are just glad to have weathered the year with faithful audiences that continued to crowd into theaters.

"Last year was the record of all time. The economy's tough. Things are bad out there, and I think if we can have another record-breaking year or close to it, I figure we'll all be happy," said Dan Fellman, head of distribution for Warner Bros., which released the year's biggest hit with "The Dark Knight" (\$531 million).

Through New Year's Eve, 2008 domestic revenues are expected to come in just shy of 2007's record of \$9.7 billion, according to box-office tracker Media By Numbers. Factoring in higher admission prices, the actual number of tickets sold in 2008 is running 5 percent behind last year's, when admissions totaled 1.4 billion.

Hollywood historically survives recessions better than many businesses because movies remain relatively cheap compared with sporting events, live theater and other forms of entertainment.

While consumer belt-tightening no doubt costs studios some cash, the list of 2008 blockbusters is a sign of a

healthy business delivering the goods across every genre.

With a \$158.4 million debut, the Batman sequel "The Dark Knight" shattered the record for best opening weekend and has put Heath Ledger on track for a possible posthumous Academy Award as the maniacal villain the Joker.

Paramount and Marvel Studios' "Iron Man" was the superhero runner-up with a \$318.3 million haul. Old-school hero Harrison Ford cracked his whip again as Paramount's "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" followed closely with \$317 million.

Among other smashes: Sony's Will Smith adventure "Hancock" and James Bond thriller "Quantum of Solace"; Universal's action tale "Wanted"; and a rush of animated comedies led by the Disney-Pixar charmer "WALL-E."

While young males remained Hollywood's core audience, girls and women flocked to theaters for the Warner Bros. comedy "Sex and the City"; Summit Entertainment's vampire romance "Twilight"; Universal's musical "Mamma Mia!"; and Disney's "Hannah Montana" concert flick.

Quality-wise, the summer blockbusters came in a cut above the usual lineup of silly action and lowbrow comedy. Critics liked "Iron Man" and adored "WALL-E" and "The Dark Knight," the latter heading

toward Jan. 22 Oscar nominations with best-picture buzz.

The 2008 lineup showed that hit movies do not "have to be a mindless concept," said Rob Moore, vice chairman of Paramount, whose 2008 successes also included the comedy "Tropic Thunder," featuring fresh and wildly different performances from "Iron Man" star Robert Downey Jr. and Tom Cruise. "If you tell a compelling story, you can get an audience to show up."

With a huge Christmas weekend, Hollywood continued to serve up must-see movies, from 20th Century Fox's family tale "Marley & Me" to a surge of awards contenders such as "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," "Doubt," "Revolutionary Road" and "Gran Torino."

When they see films they like, audiences tend to come back for more. So the goodwill gained from recent successes should help carry the movie business into 2009—as long as the movies remain good, said Paul Dergarabedian, president of Media By Numbers.

"It's vitally important now more than ever that movies deliver, because people are careful about what they're spending their money on. So they have to be satisfied with the product," Dergarabedian said. "When audiences use the movies as a retreat from their everyday troubles, that retreat had better make them feel good."

## 'Valkyrie' non-flop augurs well for Cruise, UA

NEW YORK (AP)—After the reasonably strong box office performance of "Valkyrie" over the weekend, skeptics were robbed of the chance to declare "Flop!"

The Tom Cruise WWII thriller earned \$21.5 million over the weekend, with a four-day haul of \$30 million since it opened on Christmas Day.

That was a solid and better than expected box-office draw for "Valkyrie," which cost a reported \$90 million to produce (director Bryan Singer has pegged it at closer to \$75 million) and perhaps more than half that to market it.

"This totally robs the naysayers of their ability to deem it a flop, because it's not," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box-office tracker Media By Numbers. "It does show the renewed star power of Tom Cruise."

Dergarabedian credited Cruise's comic (and Golden Globe nominated) performance in the summer's "Tropic Thunder" in helping audiences again embrace the actor.

He also noted that a film about Nazis wouldn't have earned nearly as much without Cruise's star power and a savvy marketing campaign. That campaign—which positioned "Valkyrie" as a historical thriller and led to an audience that MGM said skewed 55 percent male—helped turn back earlier bad publicity.



AP

Actor Tom Cruise arrives at the premiere of "Valkyrie" in Los Angeles on Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008.

When photos were first released showing Cruise as would-be Adolf Hitler assassin Col. Claus von Stauffenberg, the pictures of the actor in a German WWII uniform and eye patch were widely mocked online. A brief disagreement with the German Defense Ministry due to Cruise's Scientology beliefs also didn't help.

And United Artists, a division of MGM, repeatedly shifted the release date before settling on a Christmas Day release but without an Oscar campaign. For his

part, Cruise, who co-owns UA, kept his sense of humor about it.

"Go kill Hitler on Christmas!" joked Cruise in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

But the move paid off partially because of high across-the-board returns on the holiday.

According to Sunday estimates, "Marley & Me" debuted at No. 1 with \$37 million in weekend ticket sales and a total of \$51.7 million since opening Christmas Day. The four-day take of Adam Sandler's "Bedtime Stories" totaled \$38.6 million and "Benjamin Button" grossed \$39 in the same period.

The stakes may have been highest, though, for "Valkyrie." It was only the second film released by UA since it was reformed by Cruise and producer Paula Wagner. Last year's "Lions for Lambs," in which Cruise starred with Meryl Streep, earned just \$15 million.

Cruise and Wagner (who has since left her chief executive post at UA) initially planned to release four films a year, so there is all the more pressure on "Valkyrie"—UA's one 2008 film—to perform well.

Dergarabedian believes "Valkyrie" stands a good chance of becoming profitable in the end, partially because Cruise is still a big draw internationally. Even "Lions for Lambs" managed nearly \$50 million at the foreign box office.

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<p><b>Bedtime Stories</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:20 4:05 7:25 9:45            Sun thru Wed 1:20 4:05 7:25            Thursday 1:20 4:05 7:25 9:45</p> <p><b>Adam Sandler, Keri Russell</b>            Comedy, Adventure • Rated PG 13</p>	<p><b>Synopsis</b></p> <p>Hotel handyman Skeeter Bronson's life is changed forever when the bedtime stories he tells his niece and nephew start to mysteriously come true. When he tries to help his family by telling one outlandish tale after another, it's the kids' unexpected contributions that turn all of their lives upside down.</p>
<p><b>The Curious Case of Benjamin Button</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00            Sun thru Wed 1:20 4:00 7:00            Thursday 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00</p> <p><b>Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett</b>            Drama, Romance • Rated PG 13</p>	<p><b>Synopsis</b></p> <p>Benjamin Button is a man who is born in his eighties and ages backwards: a man, like any of us, who is unable to stop time. From New Orleans at the end of World War I in 1918, into the 21st century, on a journey as unusual as any man's life can be, this is the grand tale of a not so ordinary man and the people and places he discovers along the way, the loves he finds and loses, the joys of life and the sadness of death, and what lasts beyond time.</p>
<p><b>Marley &amp; Me</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55            Sun thru Wed 1:25 4:30 7:15            Thursday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55</p> <p><b>Owen Wilson, Jennifer Aniston</b>            Comedy, Drama • Rated PG 13</p>	<p><b>Valkyrie</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50            Sun thru Wed 1:30 4:25 7:20            Thursday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50</p> <p><b>Tom Cruise, Bill Nighy</b>            Thriller, War, Historical • Rated PG 13</p>
<p><b>Yes Man</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:35            Sun thru Wed 1:05 4:20 7:05            Thursday 1:05 4:20 7:05 9:35</p> <p><b>Jim Carrey, Bradley Cooper</b>            Comedy • Rated PG 13</p>	<p><b>Synopsis</b></p> <p>Carl Allen's life is going nowhere—the operative word being "no"—until he signs up for a self-help program based on one simple covenant: say yes to everything—and anything. Unleashing the power of "YES" begins to transform Carl's life in amazing and unexpected ways, getting him promoted at work and opening the door to a new romance.</p>
<p><b>The Tale of Despereaux</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:30            Sun thru Wed 1:10 4:15 7:30            Thursday 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:30</p> <p><b>Sigourney Weaver, Dustin Hoffman</b>            Animated, Children • Rated G</p>	<p><b>Seven Pounds</b></p> <p>Thurs thru Sat 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:40            Sun thru Wed 1:15 4:10 7:10            Thursday 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:40</p> <p><b>Will Smith, Rosario Dawson</b>            Drama, Romance • Rated PG 13</p>

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# Hoffman, Hopper among Critics' Choice presenters



AP  
In this Oct. 6, 2008, file photo Dakota Fanning poses at the premiere of the film "The Secret Life of Bees" in Beverly Hills, Calif.

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Dustin Hoffman, Dennis Hopper, Dakota Fanning and Sarah Silverman are set to join the star-studded list of presenters at the Critics' Choice Awards.

Organizers said Monday that Amy Adams, Common, Kristin Scott Thomas, Brendan Fraser, Laura Dern, Sally Hawkins and Melissa Leo will also help hand out trophies at the Jan. 8 ceremony in Santa Monica, Calif.

Previously announced presenters include Marisa Tomei, Eva Longoria Parker, Josh Brolin and Forest Whitaker.

The Critics' Choice Awards, presented by the Broadcast Film Critics Association, honor the best in film in 17 categories. "Milk" and "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" lead nominees with eight each. The ceremony will air live on VH1.

## Barenboim: Violence won't resolve Mideast conflict

**VIENNA, Austria (AP)**—The Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be resolved militarily, conductor Daniel Barenboim said Monday.

Three days of Israeli airstrikes in Gaza have killed more than 300 Palestinians. Israel launched the attack in retaliation for Hamas rocket fire aimed at civilians in southern Israeli towns.

Barenboim, speaking to reporters in a Vienna hotel, called the recent developments "terrible events."

"There are still ... far too many people who are still convinced that they can resolve this

conflict militarily," Barenboim said. "That can't be done. That absolutely can't be done."

Barenboim grew up in Israel and, together with the late Palestinian-American intellectual Edward Said, formed an orchestra that brings together young Israeli and Arab musicians.

Barenboim is a contentious figure in Israel for championing Palestinians' rights. He has accepted honorary Palestinian citizenship in recognition of his work to promote musical education for young Palestinians.

Barenboim is to conduct the Vienna Philharmonic's annual New Year's concert on Thursday.

## Man's fashion statement draws derision from family members

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

**DEAR ABBY:** My problem is unusual, but I'm hoping if you address it in your column it will help. I'm a married man, confident in who I am, who wears skirts for comfort. I feel skirts are more comfortable than pants, which I find tight, restrictive and uncomfortable. I wear skirts around the house, when I'm out running errands and when I attend church. My clergyman has raised no objection to it.



*Dear Abby*

After much research, my wife and I have concluded that the only thing against men wearing skirts is social pressure, and then only in certain countries—America being one of them.

Pants are a relatively new style of clothing. For thousands of years of recorded history, men and women both wore skirts. Then women fought for and won the right to wear pants, shorts, whatever they wanted—which is great. I believe men should have the same option. My wife supports me in this.

Our problem is some family members who disagree have talked behind our backs, started rumors and turned people against us with false information. How can I make them understand that they are entitled to their belief, but that they shouldn't gossip and create problems for us because I am not doing anything wrong?

JOE IN PENNSYLVANIA

**DEAR JOE:** Gossip is the province of small-minded people, and it is sad that your relatives have used the fact that you have chosen to be different as an opportunity to spread malicious falsehoods.

As long as you have the testicular fortitude and shape-ly enough legs to wear skirts, then you have my blessing. Some men's clothing designers have been trying for years to revive skirts as part of men's wardrobes. Because fashion trends not only change but often revolve, who's to say you're not on the leading edge of what's to come?

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** A friend of mine bought me a bathrobe. I had told her a while ago that my favorite one had become old, ragged and faded. I also mentioned that I'd had a hard time finding one to replace it that was lightweight enough because most are too warm.

When I opened her gift, I realized that the one she had bought for me was too heavy. I went to exchange it for one in a thinner fabric, but found nothing I liked, so I selected some kitchen utensils because I enjoy cooking and have cooked for her many times.

The next time I saw her, I thanked her and explained what I had done. Now she's upset with me. She says I have hurt her feelings, and she's holding it against me. Was I rude by exchanging her gift, and if so, how can I make it better? Her friendship is important to me.

TONY IN ALTOONA

**DEAR TONY:** Apologize to her again, and tell her you're sorry her feelings were hurt. Then ask her what she would have preferred—to have her gift hanging unused in your closet because it wasn't comfortable, or exchanged for something you could really use. As emotionally vested as she may have been in the bathrobe she selected, if she has a practical bone in her body, she should see it your way.

■ ■ ■ ■

**DEAR READERS:** From the bottom of my heart, I wish all of you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2009. And please, if you're driving tonight, don't drink; and if you're drinking tonight, don't drive. Stay safe, everyone!—Love, ABBY

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

## Fighter pilot, documentary filmmaker Aanenson dies

**BETHESDA, Md. (AP)**—Quentin C. Aanenson, a fighter pilot whose wartime experiences helped millions of television viewers understand World War II, has died.

A subject of Ken Burns' documentary "The War" and the producer of his own film a decade earlier, Aanenson died Sunday of cancer at his home in Bethesda, his son, Jerry said. He was 87.

"He lived a magnificent life," Jerry Aanenson said. "He said if he had a chance to be 15 again, he wouldn't take it."

The native of Luverne, Minn., flew 75 combat missions in Europe as a captain in P-47 Thunderbolt fighters. His first was a bombing run on German positions in France on D-Day, before Allied troops landed there, according to a biography posted on the PBS Web site.

He had enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942 and would fly mostly with the 391st Fighter Squadron of the 366th Fighter Group, according to his Web site.

After the war, Aanenson worked as a principal officer for Mutual of New York in the middle Atlantic region; he retired in 1987.

He wrote, filmed and narrated the documentary, "A Fighter Pilot's Story," which related his wartime experiences and was shown on public television around the country starting in 1994.

Aanenson's contributions to Burns' seven-part World War II documentary that aired last year included interviews and letters he sent home to his girlfriend, Jacqueline, whom he later married.

## Fox says it will try to stop 'Watchmen'

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—An attorney for 20th Century Fox says the studio will press its case to delay the release of "Watchmen," but a rival studio says it plans to release the film as scheduled.

U.S. District Court Judge Gary Feess last week agreed with Fox that Warner Bros. had infringed its copyright by developing and shooting the superhero flick, casting some doubt on its March 6 release date.

Feess said Monday he plans to hold a trial Jan. 20 to decide remaining issues.

Fox claims it never fully relinquished story rights for the graphic novel from its deal made in the late 1980s, and sued Warner Bros. in February. Warner Bros. contended Fox isn't entitled to distribution.



AP  
In this image released by Warner Bros., Jeffrey Dean Morgan stars as The Comedian in a scene from the film, "Watchmen."

Warner Bros. said in a statement released Monday afternoon that it won't move the movie's release date and still thinks it will win the case, either at trial or through an appeal.

## Jazz great Freddie Hubbard dead at 70

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Freddie Hubbard, the Grammy-winning jazz musician whose style influenced a generation of trumpet players and who collaborated with such greats as Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins, died Monday, a month after suffering a heart attack. He was 70.

Hubbard died at Sherman Oaks Hospital, said his manager, fellow trumpeter David Weiss of the New Jazz Composers Octet. He had been hospitalized since suffering the heart attack a day before Thanksgiving.

A towering figure in jazz circles, Hubbard played on hundreds of recordings in a career dating to 1958, the year he arrived in New York from his hometown Indianapolis, where he had studied at the Arthur Jordan Conservatory of Music and with the Indianapolis Symphony.



AP  
This June 14, 2008 file photo shows Freddie Hubbard and his band perform at the 10th Annual Indy Jazz Fest at Military Park in Indianapolis, Ind.

Soon he had hooked up with such jazz legends as Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis, Cannonball Adderley and Coltrane.

Soon he had hooked up with such jazz legends as Thelonious Monk, Miles Davis, Cannonball Adderley and Coltrane.



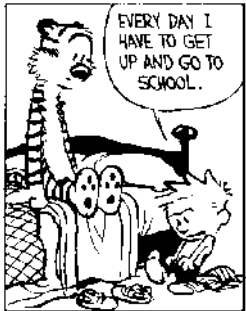
# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

## Garfield®

By Jim Davis

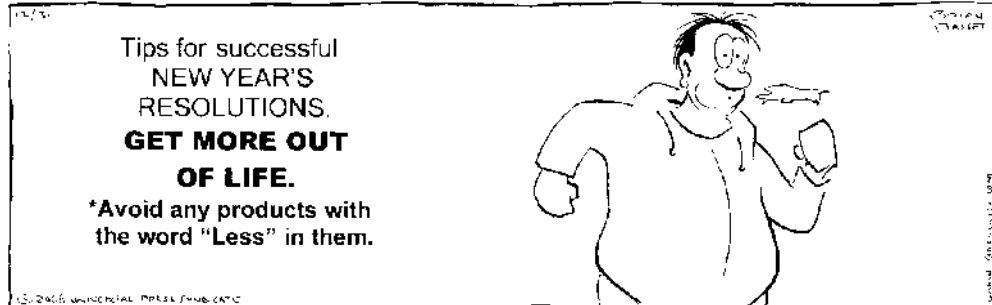


## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



## CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 See  
31-Down  
5 Satchel  
8 Criterion  
12 Colliery  
13 Gabor or Peron  
14 Bygone Peruvian  
15 Risk  
17 Leading man?  
18 Lariat component  
19 Some of the nobility  
21 Source of wealth  
24 Needle-fish  
25 Follow instructions  
28 "Bus Stop" playwright  
30 Wield a needle  
33 Tri-umphed  
34 Done  
35 Id counter-part  
36 Young fellow

**DOWN**

1 Sign of things to come  
2 Veritas source  
3 Loosen  
4 Contemptibly small  
5 Plead  
6 "Hail!"  
7 Apparel  
8 Miss America's topper  
9 Backed  
10 Read quickly  
11 Scottish chapeaus  
16 Ultra-modernist  
20 On in years  
22 Pebbles' pet  
23 Furnish with a grant  
25 Woody is one  
26 Feathery accessory  
27 Evoked affection  
29 "American Gigolo" actor  
31 Early bird?  
32 Tragedy  
34 — St. Vincent Millay  
38 Wandering  
40 Midwest airport  
42 Expert  
43 Smooth-talking  
44 Puerto follower  
45 Dissolve  
47 State with certainty  
48 Links warning  
49 Helen of —  
52 Dundee denial  
53 Go blond

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

A	F	A	R	M	A	C	A	D	O	S
R	O	L	E	A	S	H	C	O	R	E
G	O	L	V	I	L	L	E	C	O	Z
H	I	V	E	S	T	I	N	E	J	R
O	D	E	S	M	E	L	V	L	E	
L	E	I	F	I	L	L	A	I	D	
D	A	N	V	I	L	L	E	L	O	N
G	L	R	N	E	Y	W	E	B		
E	U	I	W	H	O	V	E	L	E	
L	A	S	T	A	J	K	S	E	E	R
T	A	F	Y	V	E	S	O	V	E	R

Yesterday's answer: 12-31

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Joe McIntyre, 36; Val Kilmer, 49; Andy Summers, 66; Anthony Hopkins, 71

**Happy Birthday:** You'll have a much better handle on what's going on than most people this year but that doesn't mean you should take advantage of the weak. Yes, you have to look out for your own interests but try to carry others along with you. Don't let an emotional matter cloud your vision or stop you from doing what needs to be done. Your numbers are 3, 13, 19, 22, 28, 32, 49

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Make wise choices. If you don't feel like celebrating, stay home and enjoy the peace and quiet. Someone may try to intimidate you into doing something you don't want to do—be firm and say no. ★★★★★

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Rethink your strategy if you are having problems with someone you thought you were going to move forward with professionally or personally. Don't be afraid—pass on a partnership and move on. ★★

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Stretch yourself as thin as possible if it means being able to spend time with people who can influence your future. Being organized will be the key. Plan some fun for late in the day. ★★★★★

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** You may fear change but that's exactly what you need. There are many choices and even more decisions to be made before year's end. Make sure you are sitting in a good position financially before you leap into the upcoming year. ★★

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Money issues are likely to arise. Overspending on your part or the part of someone dependent on you must be questioned and dealt with. Trying to buy someone's favor will only put you in the poorhouse. ★★

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** If you haven't made plans for this evening, join in the end of year festivities. This is a night to start building your momentum for the upcoming year. You will be in demand if you are a participant. ★★

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** It's party time and you will be a great addition to any guest list. Be prepared to be inviting, informative and unafraid. The future looks bright. ★★★★★

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Pick up the phone and wish the people on your mind a happy new year. The conversations you have today will be very important for your future. There is much to be accomplished, so surround yourself with intellectual conversation. ★★

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Have plans in motion for the end-of-year celebrations. Whether big or small and intimate, the company you keep today and tonight will mark the flavor of the upcoming year. Change is upon you and it's you who makes the choices. ★★★★★

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** You may have left important issues to the last minute but you can still talk your way to

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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settling whatever has been left undone. Don't be afraid to blow your horn and display your attributes for all to see. Your confidence will get you what you want. ★★

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Look back and judge your past before you leap forward into the future. Someone you once knew will make a difference to a pressing decision you have to make. An offer to utilize your time and your knowledge for something important must be considered. ★★

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Close the year with a bang. Make sure you get out with people who can make a difference to your year ahead. You have things to promote and partnerships to pursue, so make the year-end festivities work in your favor. ★★

**Birthday Baby:** You are open, original and speak from the heart. You are dedicated, caring and sensitive. You are a brilliant strategist.

Eugenia's Web sites: [astroadvice.com](http://astroadvice.com) for fun, [eugenialast.com](http://eugenialast.com) for confidential consultations

## SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

			1							
	9		7		2					
	6	1			2					
	3					8				
6									1	
8	4					6	9	5		
	8		1	9			3			
	2		8	3				5		
	1	3	2	4	6	9	7			

Difficulty Level ★★

12/31

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	2	5	8	7	6	9	4	3
9	3	8	1	4	5	2	6	7
6	4	7	9	3	2	1	5	8
3	1	9	2	6	4	8	7	5
5	6	2	7	9	8	3	1	4
8	7	4	5	1	3	6	2	9
7	8	1	4	2	9	5	3	6
2	9	6	3	5	7	4	8	1
4	5	3	6	8	1	7	9	2

## WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The letter-letters spell the Wonderword.

MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

Solution: 6 letters

S	K	A	N	I	D	E	M	N	T	R	E	S	E	D
T	O	G	O	M	R	I	A	J	E	W	E	L	R	Y
E	U	A	R	U	A	I	D	P	Y	R	A	A	A	N
P	T	T	T	N	D	R	P	A	F	F	Y	I	I	A
R	O	L	H	A	A	O	I	V	S	T	L	A	L	S
A	U	A	A	U	C	R	I	N	R	K	G	L	W	T
C	B	S	Y	M	I	R	A	U	I	R	U	M	A	Y
V	I	E	E	A	L	M	O	H	A	D	B	O	Y	R
I	A	T	D	R	L	C	I	B	A	R	A	R	S	T
L	A	E	A	A	C	I	R	F	A	S	E	A	U	E
L	M	R	Y	N	L	T	W	S	T	S	V	L	K	
A	E	A	Y	E	O	O	S	T	I	P	I	T	S	
G	J	U	A	M	O	Z	O	A	H	I	D	A	A	
E	D	Q	B	L	Z	P	A	L	A	C	E	N	B	
M	U	S	E	U	M	E	G	A	N	R	E	V	I	H

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12/31

Africa, Alley, Almohad, Almohad, Arabic, Atlas, Ayyaq, Barga, Baskerville, Brass, Carpets, Copper, Courtyard, Culture, Desert, Die, Dynasty, Haouz, Hvernage, Jewelry, Koutoubia, Varid, Vedra, Menara, Metal, Museum, North, Palace, Pottery, Railway, Had, River, Ruin, Saadian, Sadid, Senanan, Stairs, Spice, Square, Sultan, Tombs, Village, Wall, Wilaya, Wool

Yesterday's Answer: San Roque

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## STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/relay phones. (18+ or y). A King Features service, NYC.



# CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL**

Apartment for rent: Brand new studio type apartment, across NMC & Riviera Hotel,

brand new...furnished, air-conditioner, water heater, refrigerator, free wi-fi internet. Only \$200/month. Contact: Danny @ 287-2387.

**FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL**

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, FF, AC, 24-hr pwr./water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample park-

ing. MIHA applicants accepted. Right behind NMC campus. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

## CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

*Saipan Tribune's* Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

### CLASSIFIED ADS

*Saipan Tribune* also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	<b>\$25</b>
• 5-Liner	<b>\$35</b>
• 3-Liner with picture	<b>\$45</b>
• 5-Liner with picture	<b>\$55</b>

### ADVERTISING DEADLINE

#### Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:  
- *Saipan Tribune*: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

### CANCELLATION

#### Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

### REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

### CHECK YOUR ADS

*Saipan Tribune* will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

### ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

**JOETEN ENTERPRISES, INC.**

Is looking for qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

**WAREHOUSE SUPERVISOR  
WAREHOUSE RECEIVING & DELIVERY  
RETAIL SUPERVISOR  
CASHEIRS  
STOCKERS/SALES**

Interested applicants may apply at the Human Resources Office from Monday through Friday, 8-5pm.  
2nd floor Joeten Shopping Center, Susupe, Saipan.

**NO PHONE CALLS, PLEASE**

**WHATZIT?**

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

**SAIPAN PRINCIPAL**

Find today's solution in this section

**FOR SALE-COMMERCIAL**

Beauty Salon  
For Sale  
Contact Tel.: # 234-1118

**Computer Repair**

Only **\$25** WE ALSO FIX  
Minor Problem LAPTOP &  
USED PARTS

**233-5641**  
Open 7 Day a Week  
9:00 AM-9:00 PM

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

The Estate of MATEO M. TAISAGAN and) **CIVIL ACTION**  
The Estate of SABINA M. TAISAGAN )  
Plaintiffs, ) **NO. 08-0099**  
-v- )  
JUAN B. QUITUGUA, )  
Defendants. )

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, the Plaintiffs Attorneys, whose address is P.O. Box 5222, Saipan, MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing Your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

By order of the above court:

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Dated this 3rd day of December, 2008:

**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM  
P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950  
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE**

**JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT  
PROMOTIONAL & OPEN COMPETITIVE  
EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT**

It is the policy of the Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School Personnel System shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Public Law 6 - 10, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, handicap or place of origin. Applicants for this position must be a U.S. Citizen or be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Announcement No: **PSS-2008-081** Application & Employment Type: **Non - Certified**  
Position Title: **ARCHITECTURAL TECHNICIAN II (Re-Announcement I)**  
Pay Level/Step: **27 / 01 - 06** Per Annum Salary: **\$19,511.46 - \$24,889.35**  
Opening Date: **December 30, 2008** Closing Date: **January 14, 2009**  
Location: **PSS – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (CIP)**  
Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays  
Minimum Requirements:

**Graduation from a U.S. accredited college or university with a Associates Degree, plus six (6) years work related experience OR High School Diploma, plus eight (8) years work related experience. Must have design experience in both vertical and horizontal design, and must be proficient in Auto CADD, and also computer applications such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Project or Primevera. Must be knowledgeable of the Uniform Building Code and ADA Requirements. Must be able to travel.**

**\*Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online [www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources](http://www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources)**

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION WITH QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION FORMS AT THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT THE 3rd RETIREMENT BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE). COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, RETIREMENT BUILDING; THIRD FLOOR, P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, and TEL. #. (670) 237-3051, FAX # (670) 664-3707. ALSO VISIT <http://www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources> ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB.



# Suns get back on track, beat Thunder



**OKLAHOMA CITY** (AP)—When his two-time MVP left the game with back spasms, Phoenix Suns coach Terry Porter ran his offense through another former MVP nearly twice the point guard's size: Shaquille O'Neal.

O'Neal moved into ninth place on the NBA's career scoring list with 28 points and 12 rebounds, and the Suns overcame the loss of Steve Nash to beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 110-102 on Monday night.

Nash played only 9 minutes before his back spasms struck and Amare Stoudemire was hounded by foul trouble, but the Suns still had plenty of firepower to overwhelm the NBA-worst Thunder.

"When Nash went down and then Amare got in trouble, Shaq became really our point guard and our scorer at times," Porter said. "We just threw it in to him and then just played off of him."

O'Neal had an easy time against the Thunder's undermanned front line, which is still hoping to add former New Jersey Nets 7-footer Nenad Krstic. Krstic signed an offer sheet last week with the Thunder, and time was running out for the Nets to match it Monday night.

In the meantime, O'Neal went 10-for-12 and passed Dominique Wilkins for ninth place on the league's career scoring list. It was his fourth-highest scoring output of the season and his 10th double-double.

"I've been telling them all year: 'When they get it to me and let me do what I do, I can still put up those numbers.' Just because I'm 35, sometimes they think that he's old, he can't do it," O'Neal said. "Guys were looking for me, and I was just doing what I do."

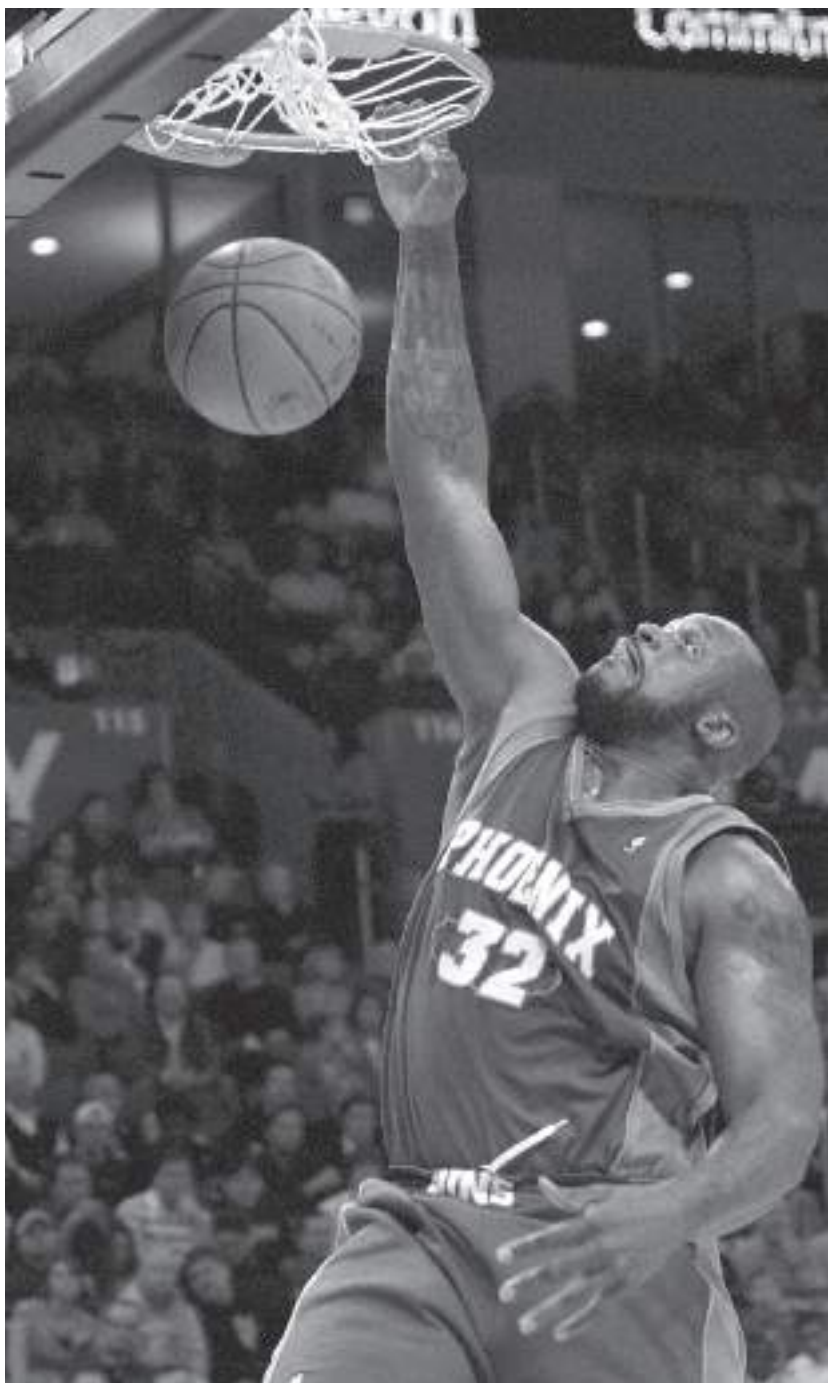
Jason Richardson scored 20 points and reserve Matt Barnes had 19 for Phoenix, which snapped a four-game road losing streak. Phoenix held Oklahoma City scoreless for the first 5 minutes of the fourth quarter and forced eight of the Thunder's 15 turnovers in the final period to put away the game.

Nash wasn't sure after the game whether his back would be feeling good enough for him to play Tuesday night at Memphis, but he expected to be back for a Jan. 2 home game against the Los Angeles Clippers.

Rookie Russell Westbrook scored a career-high 31 and Jeff Green 22 to lead Oklahoma City, which fizzled after a hot start.

"We gave ourselves a chance going into the fourth quarter, but we didn't do a good job of taking care of the basketball," Thunder coach Scott Brooks said. "It's something that we will continue to talk about and work on."

The Suns dug themselves a double-



Phoenix Suns center Shaquille O'Neal dunks against the Oklahoma City Thunder in the second quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Monday, Dec. 29, 2008. O'Neal had 28 points and 12 rebounds as Phoenix won 110-102.

digit hole, just like they did in their last visit to Oklahoma City, and this time Nash wasn't around to bail them out. Instead it was a pair of players who weren't on the floor for that trip: O'Neal, who was resting, and Richardson, who hadn't yet joined the team through a trade.

Stoudemire had his streak of 11 straight games of at least 20 points snapped. He played only 7 minutes in the second half and fouled out in the fourth quarter with 14 points. Grant Hill added 11 points and Leandro Barbosa, who replaced Nash, had 10 points and a career-high six steals.

But the Thunder, who were without Joe Smith (sore right leg) and had Nick Collison limited by a broken left thumb, had no answer for Shaq.

"He was starting the break, bringing it up a little bit, getting the ball up," Richardson said. "He was mak-

ing some great passes. He had a good game for us."

O'Neal believes the Suns should lean on him more often, even if Nash and Stoudemire are in the mix.

"I've been doing that my whole career and I think that's how this team should play, especially the way I'm shooting free throws now. It should be an inside-outside game," said O'Neal, who went 8-for-12 on free throws.

"I've been in the league 15 years and I've been in (the finals) six times, and that's the way you get there. I think once we do that and develop some consistency and stop turning the ball over, then we'll be all right."

Kevin Durant scored 18 points on 5-for-17 shooting, cooling off after making his first two shots as the Thunder started out 6-for-6 to build a quick nine-point lead.

It was 23-13 after Westbrook hit his

third 3-pointer, matching his career high in only 6 minutes. Westbrook started out by connecting on his first six shots for 15 points.

Phoenix came right back and took its first lead on Barbosa's layup to start the second quarter and took the lead for good with a 14-2 run that put them up 60-55 at halftime.

## Pistons 88, Magic 82

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Rodney Stuckey led a balanced attack with 19 points and Detroit beat Orlando for its fourth straight win.

The Magic had won seven straight and were playing a Detroit team that was missing Richard Hamilton (groin), but they trailed for nearly the entire game.

Tayshaun Prince and Rasheed Wallace each scored 16 points and Allen Iverson had 15 to lead five Pistons in double figures.

Rashard Lewis led the Magic with 23 points while Dwight Howard added 18 points and 18 rebounds.

## Hawks 109, Nuggets 91

At Atlanta, Joe Johnson scored 25 points and Atlanta beat Denver to close out an important homestand with a long-awaited milestone.

Atlanta completed an eight-game homestand, its longest of the season, with a 7-1 record, including five straight wins. Its only loss was to Boston.

The Hawks (20-10) reached 20 wins before New Year's Day for the first time since the 1987-88 season. Atlanta plays Tuesday at Indiana in its final game of 2008.

Seven teams won 20 games this season before the Hawks. Even relatively modest accomplishments are noteworthy in Atlanta, which won only 13 games in the 2004-05 season and made the playoffs last season for the first time since 1999.

## Bulls 100, Nets 87

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, rookie Derrick Rose had 21 points and a season-high 13 assists, Ben Gordon scored 24 points, and Chicago beat New Jersey.

The Nets continued their poor play at home, falling to 5-12, the second-worst mark in the Eastern Conference. The Nets (15-16) are 10-4 on the road.

Andres Nocioni and Larry Hughes each added 17 points for the Bulls, who won for only the fourth time in 18 road games this season. It was Chicago's first win in New Jersey since 2001, snapping a 13-game losing streak.

Vince Carter scored 31 points and Devin Harris added 26 for the Nets.

## Timberwolves 108, Grizzlies 98, OT

At Minneapolis, Al Jefferson scored a season-high 38 points, including nine in

overtime, and grabbed 16 rebounds to lead Minnesota over Memphis.

Jefferson scored the Timberwolves' first seven points in overtime, helping them overcome the efforts of rookie scoring leader O.J. Mayo—who was picked and traded by Minnesota on draft night.

Mayo had 23 points and Kyle Lowry finished with a career-high 12 assists, but Memphis lost its second consecutive overtime game and sixth in its last seven overall.

## Wizards 89, Rockets 87

At Houston, Antawn Jamison scored a season-high 30 points, Andray Blatche added 16 points and eight rebounds as Washington snapped a five-game road losing streak with a win over listless Houston.

Jamison also grabbed 12 rebounds and Nick Young added 14 points as the Wizards snapped a seven-game losing streak to the Rockets and won in Houston for the first time since 2001.

Ron Artest scored 20 points, but also had six turnovers for the Rockets, who had a seven-game home winning streak snapped by the worst team in the Eastern Conference.

## Jazz 112, 76ers 95

At Salt Lake City, Deron Williams scored 27 points to help the short-handed Utah beat Philadelphia.

Okur, who missed the last two games with back spasms, had 19 points and 10 rebounds.

Andrei Kirilenko, filling in for injured power forwards Carlos Boozer and Paul Millsap, had 16 points and 13 rebounds.

Andre Iguodala and Thaddeus Young each scored 17 points for Philadelphia, which dropped its fourth straight and is winless on its six-game road trip with three remaining.

## Warriors 117, Raptors 111

At Oakland, California, Stephen Jackson scored 30 points and Marco Belinelli added 23 as Golden State held off road-weary Toronto.

Kelenna Azubuike scored 18 points while Belinelli hit five 3-pointers for the Warriors, who won for just the third time in 11 games. Golden State had just enough fourth-quarter offense to stop the Raptors, who finished a tough six-game holiday road trip with four losses.

Chris Bosh had 30 points and 14 rebounds for Toronto, hitting a 3-pointer with 3:29 left to pull the Raptors within two points. Jose Calderon added 21 points and 16 assists, but the Raptors missed several open 3-pointers in the final minutes, perhaps finally running out of energy after 12 days on the road.

## NBA BRIEFS

### Suns' Nash leaves with back spasms

**OKLAHOMA CITY** (AP)—Former MVP Steve Nash left the Phoenix Suns' game against Oklahoma City in the first quarter Monday night with back spasms and was not expected to return. Nash played just over nine minutes before being replaced by Leandro Barbosa. He had yet to take a shot but had recorded two assists. It's the second game this season Nash has left because of back

spasms. He also exited in the final 5 minutes of a 105-92 loss to the Los Angeles Lakers on Nov. 20.

### NBA suspends Ricky Davis for 5 games

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Clippers swingman Ricky Davis was suspended five games Monday for violating terms of the NBA's drug program. The NBA said Davis' suspension will begin with the next game for which he is eligible

and physically able to play. Davis, who hasn't played since Nov. 22 because of a sore left knee, is averaging 4.3 points in 13 games in his first season with the Clippers. The 29-year-old Davis signed as an unrestricted free agent after averaging 13.8 points, 4.3 rebounds and 3.4 assists in 82 games for the Miami Heat last season. He has also played for Charlotte, Cleveland, Boston and Minnesota. "We've been informed of the league's action con-

cerning Ricky Davis and we will comply with all terms of the NBA's collective bargaining agreement," Clippers coach Mike Dunleavy said. "Beyond this statement, we will have no further comment on this matter."

### Nets assign C Williams to D-League affiliate

**EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.** (AP)—The New Jersey Nets assigned former first-round draft pick Sean Williams

to the Colorado 14ers of the NBA Development League on Monday. The 6-foot-10 second-year center, who was drafted No. 17 overall in 2007, averaged 1.6 points and 2.1 rebounds in 11 minutes per game this season. He last played Dec. 12, going scoreless in six minutes in a 101-79 loss to Toronto. As a rookie last season, Williams appeared in 73 games, starting 16, and averaged 5.6 points, 4.4 rebounds and 1.5 blocks in 17.5 minutes per game.



# Marinelli, Crennel, Mangini out as coaches

By **DAVE GOLDBERG**  
AP FOOTBALL WRITER



Lofty expectations did in Eric Mangini and Romeo Crennel, as their teams' seasons crumbled from high hopes to demoralizing finishes. Little was expected of the Detroit Lions, though nor was the worst season in NFL history. That cost Rod Marinelli his job, too. "You can't go 0-16 and expect to keep your job," Marinelli said. Now two interim coaches who breathed some life into downtrodden clubs—the Rams' Jim Haslett and the Raiders' Tom Cable—await word on their fates.

Three NFL clubs fired coaches Monday, less than 24 hours after the regular season ended. Out were Marinelli, the New York Jets' Mangini and the Cleveland Browns' Crennel.

Only Mangini's firing came as a bit of a surprise. The Jets harbored Super Bowl aspirations after an 8-3 start that followed an offseason spending spree,

including the trade for Brett Favre. But they didn't even make the playoffs, losing four of their last five games.

"I don't think it was one thing," owner Woody Johnson said. "We had to go in a different direction. There's nothing specific. It's just a call we made. Hopefully, it's correct."

The Browns' search to replace Crennel is already off to a disheartening start: Bill Cowher told owner Randy Lerner on Saturday that he doesn't intend to coach in 2009.

Cleveland was rewarded with five prime-time TV appearances this season after going 10-6 in 2007 and placing six players in the Pro Bowl. But the Browns collapsed to 4-12 amid injuries and didn't score an offensive touchdown while losing their last six games.

"Romeo was a gentleman through and through," Lerner said. "He was gracious to a fault."

The Lions became the first NFL club to go 0-16 with their loss to the Packers

on Sunday. Marinelli won only one of his last 24 games.

Three coaches were fired during the regular season: Mike Nolan in San Francisco, Scott Linehan in St. Louis and Lane Kiffin in Oakland.

Mike Singletary replaced Nolan and will be retained after the 49ers went 5-4 in their final nine games.

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones insists Wade Phillips will return as coach after Dallas, a preseason Super Bowl favorite, failed to make the playoffs—and was eliminated in humiliating fashion in Sunday's 44-6 loss to Philadelphia. Phillips vowed Monday to do things differently.

"We know things must improve. The only way is to change things," he said. "To get to the standard we want, I don't see another way."

Cable went 4-8 after taking over the Raiders and ended the season with two straight victories, knocking the Buccaneers out of the playoffs Sunday. Haslett went 2-10 with the Rams.

## Patriots end 2008 season on a roll but out of post season

**FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)**—The New England Patriots' season began with the shock of Tom Brady's knee injury and ended with more bad news: no playoff berth despite an 11-5 record.

Surrounded by the odd sight of empty lockers before New Year's Day, some players found it very strange that their playoff run ended at five straight seasons.

"If you would normally tell me you're sitting at 11-5 and winning your last game and be going home, I'd think you'd be talking crazy," cornerback Ellis Hobbs said Monday, "but that's the case."

Others simply acknowledged that a season-ending four-game winning streak in which the Patriots outscored opponents 133-54 couldn't keep them from becoming just the second team in 31 seasons of the 16-game schedule to miss the playoffs at 11-5.

"We started a little late, I guess," said linebacker Mike Vrabel, who played on all three Patriots championship teams this decade.

And if they had reached the playoffs?

"I felt like we were hitting the right stride at the right time," defensive end Richard Seymour said. "I felt like we could have done damage. But, hopefully, that will leave some room for improvement next season."

Decimated by injuries to key players but boosted by the play of replacements, especially quarterback Matt Cassel, New England tied Miami for first place. They split their two meetings and had the same division record, but the Dolphins won the AFC East on the third tiebreaker, conference record.

The early exit came a season after the Patriots lost the chance for a perfect 19-0 record on a last-minute touchdown by the New York Giants in the Super Bowl.

Now they have plenty of time to rest up.

"If you guys haven't figured out by now that there's not much correlation from one year to the next, then I don't

know what it would take," coach Bill Belichick told reporters. "We've seen that time and time and time again."

Seven of this season's 12 playoff teams did not get in last season.

For the Patriots, safety Rodney Harrison and linebacker Tedy Bruschi, two accomplished veterans, could retire after missing significant time with serious injuries. But first-round pick Jerod Mayo had an outstanding season at linebacker. And other rookies—linebacker Gary Guyton and cornerbacks Jonathan Wilhite and Terrence Wheatley—played well and provide much-needed youth for the defensive core.

Wes Welker had another brilliant season with 111 catches after getting 112 in 2007. Randy Moss finished with just 69 receptions but 11 touchdowns.

New England could lose vice president of player personnel Scott Pioli, who helped put together the three championship teams, and offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels to Cleveland. The Browns have received permission to speak with Pioli, and owner Randy Lerner said McDaniels is on his list of candidates to succeed the fired Romeo Crennel.

Cassel also may leave after a season he described as a "blur."

He proved he could lead a team when he stepped in after Brady suffered a season-ending injury midway through the first quarter of the first game. Now he can become a free agent.

The Patriots can prevent that by putting a franchise tag on him for one year at a cost of the average salary of the top five paid quarterbacks, especially if they have concerns Brady might not be ready for next season. But that would require spending a ton of money on one position, although they also could trade Cassel if they do make him their franchise player.

Cassel doesn't know what will happen.

"It's one day after the season, so we're going to move forward and well see how it all comes about," he said.

Cassel hadn't started a game in

seven seasons—four at Southern California and three in New England—and struggled while taking most of the snaps in the exhibition season. When Brady went down, so did the hopes of Patriots fans.

"I think a lot of people wrote us off 10 minutes into the first game of the season," Seymour said. "Cassel was written off in the preseason and I just think it was a team that always found a way to win."

Not always.

Had they not lost to Indianapolis 18-15 on a fourth-quarter field goal or to the New York Jets 34-31 in overtime, the Patriots would be in the playoffs.

Not even Sunday's 13-0 win at windy Buffalo could save the Patriots, who needed the Jets to beat the Dolphins or Jacksonville to beat Baltimore to advance.

"As short as the flight was home, I replayed pretty much every play in my head that I could have done better," Hobbs said. "There were plays out there that were the difference (between) an 11-5 season or could have been worse or better."

The loss to the Jets dropped the Patriots to 6-4. They couldn't stop Brett Favre from leading the winning 14-play drive in overtime.

But then New England pounded the Dolphins 48-28 behind Cassel's three touchdown passes before losing to Pittsburgh 33-10. The Patriots won at Seattle and Oakland and returned home to rout playoff-bound Arizona 47-7 with three more scoring passes by Cassel.

"This is a satisfying season for me," he said. "I proved a lot to myself and to a lot of others."

But now that season is over. The players are headed home more than a month before the Super Bowl.

"It's tough," Vrabel said. "You try to think that it's a pretty positive ending to a season, a good finish. You finish 11-5 and then you come in here and you realize that you're cleaning your locker out."



Detroit Lions head coach Rod Marinelli is seen during the second half of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 28, 2008, in Green Bay, Wis.

### NFL BRIEFS

#### Cadillac Williams expects to play in 2009

**TAMPA, Fla. (AP)**—Tampa Bay running back Carnell "Cadillac" Williams got some encouraging news Monday. The second knee injury he's suffered in the past 15 months is not as severe as the first. Williams tore the patellar tendon in his left knee when he was tackled at the end of a 28-yard run during Sunday's season-ending loss to the Oakland Raiders. He suffered a career-threatening injury to his right knee in September 2007 and was sidelined until six weeks ago. But the fourth-year pro said that unlike last season when the patellar tendon in his right knee was ruptured, the tendon pulled away from the bone this time and should be simpler to repair and require less recovery time. "This process should be much easier," Williams said, adding that former Tampa Bay teammate and current Carolina kick returner Mark Jones suffered a similar injury when he was with the Bucs. "After six, eight weeks he was rolling, so right now I'm just hoping for the best and hoping that's it." The 2005 Offensive Rookie of the Year when he rushed for 1,178 yards and six touchdowns, Williams' production has been limited the past three seasons because of injuries. He missed the final 12 games of 2007 after undergoing surgery on his right knee and sat out the first 10 games of this year.

#### Big Ben not hospitalized following concussion

**PITTSBURGH (AP)**—Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger did not stay in a hospital overnight after receiving a concussion Sunday against Cleveland, but it was uncertain if he will practice this week. Roethlisberger lay on the ground for nearly 15 minutes after being leveled by two Browns defenders and was strapped to a stretcher as he was carried off the field. He was taken by ambulance to a local hospital but left after tests were concluded. With a week off before they begin practicing for their Jan. 11 divisional playoff game, the Steelers will work out Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, then take the weekend off. The Steelers expect Roethlisberger to be ready for that game but probably won't rush him back to practice with so much time off before they play again. When Roethlisberger sustained a concussion against Atlanta on Oct. 22, 2006, he returned a week later against Oakland but had one of the worst games of his career—throwing four interceptions, with two returned for touchdowns—during a 20-13 loss. A week after that, Roethlisberger threw for 433 yards but was intercepted three more times during a 31-20 loss to Denver. Roethlisberger has had at least three concussions in the last three years. He also received one during a June 2006 motorcycle accident. He was not wearing a helmet at the time.



# Trench Tech lines up six events for 2009

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Trench Tech promises to continue feeding the island’s seemingly insatiable taste for mixed martial arts with six events lined up in 2009.

Its president Cuki Alvarez said no-holds barred action inside the octagon returns on Jan. 24 when Trench Tech holds Rites of Passage VI: Conviction at the Trench Tech Gym in Afetnas.

Like previous stagings of Rites of Passage, the sixth edition of the MMA event will feature up-and-coming young warriors who want to test their MMA skills in front of a smaller crowd and see whether they could make it to big no-holds barred fights inside the octagon.

On March 14, Alvarez and company will then host The Art of War 3 also at the Trench Tech Gym. The grappling and submission challenge gives MMA fighters an opportunity to go back to basics.

Next in the 2009 calendar of Trench Tech will be Rites

of Passage VII: Fists of Fury on May 23 at the Trench Tech Gym and like Rites of Passage VI: Conviction, rookie warriors who win get the chance to earn an invitation to a full-fledged MMA event like Trench Warz.

Incidentally, the Commonwealth’s first Trench Warz event of 2009—Trench Warz X:

Collision—is set on July 18 at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort.

Like previous Trench Warz editions, Trench Warz X: Col-

lision is expected to attract the who’s who of MMA not only on Saipan but in Guam as well.

The Art of War 5 returns to the islands on Oct. 10 at the Afetnas venue followed by Trench Tech’s yearend Trench Warz XI: Fearless scheduled on Dec. 6 also at the Royal Taga Hall.

Trench Tech finished 2008 with a bang with its staging of Trench Warz IX: The Annihilation last Dec. 13 at Saipan World Resort.

The Annihilation saw Marianas Elite’s Kelvin “The Big Hit” Fitial defeat Spike 22 Guam’s Reuben “The Booben” Quinata in the main event.

The semi main event, meanwhile, had Myron “The Natural” San Nicolas of Marianas Elite get the better of Team Predator’s “Brutal” Bryson Sablan.

Tara “The Tarantula” Numauleg, for her part, outpointed Jenipy “So-High La” Sambile in the islands’ first ever MMA female fight. The jam-packed crowd was also treated to eight other action-packed MMA fights.

## Jordan Kosam elected RGA president



Jordan Kosam was elected president of the Refalawasch Golf Association at the association’s annual election of officers meeting last Dec. 7.

The annual meeting was held in conjunction with the RGA Club Championship banquet at the Hyatt Regency Saipan’s Kili Café. Kosam will serve until the 2009 annual meeting, December 2009.

“It is a tremendous honor to be elected by my peers as the new president. RGA has been an active golf club association in the CNMI fostering cama-

raderie among its members and other golf associations and at the same time supporting communities and schools. I’m looking forward to the responsibilities ahead of me in serving this great association. I plan to serve the club to the best of my abilities,” he said.

Kosam extended his sincere appreciation to 2008 RGA president Adam Hardwicke for his generous support and contribution during his tenure. He also thanked Jess Wabol, Sonny Flores, Tony Rogolofoi,

and the rest of RGA’s members “who took the extra mile for the association to meet its annual objective. Spouses and family members for actively engaging and supporting during its monthly tournaments. It wouldn’t have been made possible without all your support.”

The current year also saw RGA hold the 2008 Memorial Classic, where \$3,500 was raised and donated to Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School.

Aside from Kosam, also elected were vice president



Kosam

### SSC

From Page 28

Manukai, and the Marlins in the 50m freestyle timing in at 32.01 seconds.

In the exhausting 400m freestyle swim, Kimball (5:23.40) finished the race more than two minutes ahead of Manukai’s Phoebe Zhang (7:54.30).

In the 100m freestyle, Grace clocked in at 1:12.18, 1:29.82 in the 100m backstroke, 2:33.95 in the 200m freestyle, 1:41.45 in

the 100m breaststroke, and 40.85 seconds in the 50m backstroke.

Abigail Martinsen returned to Saipan with seven medals, too. The Saipan Community School student had two gold, four silver, and one bronze medals.

The 10-year-old Martinsen topped the girls’ 9-10 200m freestyle outracing six other participants with her time of 2:55.06. She won her second gold medal in the 400m freestyle (6:07.68).

Martinsen was runner-up in the 50m backstroke (50.23 seconds), 100m backstroke

(1:45.24), 100m butterfly (1:43.10), and 100m freestyle (1:22.99). Her lone bronze medal came from the 200m individual medley (3:34.27).

Grace’s brother, Andrew, went home with four medals, while Victoria Chentsova pocketed three, and Maxi Braig claimed two.

The 11-year-old Andrew bagged two silver and two bronze medals finishing second in the 200m freestyle (2:49.10) and 400m freestyle (5:56.24), and third in the

100m butterfly (1:59.74) and 200m IM (3:25.99).

The 10-year-old Chentsova was runner-up in the 50m butterfly (46.83 seconds) and 50m freestyle (37.95 seconds), and third in 200m freestyle (3:04.22).

Braig won in the boys’ 9-10 50m butterfly (39.37 seconds) and finished second in the 50m freestyle (34.36 seconds).

“Grace was very impressive with her swims, topping seven races. Overall, SSC swimmers did great and the hard work they had shown in our regular

training sessions paid off,” SSC coach Mike Villagomez said.

“This [winning 22 medals] is a great boost to SSC swimmers as they hope for great performances next year,” he added.

SSC sent seven swimmers in Guam last weekend. The list also included Lester Lapuz, Junior Pamaran, Michael Moran, and Blair Nicholls. The quartet won a bronze medal in the 200m freestyle relay.

Nichols got his second bronze medal with a third place finish in the boys’ 18-and-under

100m backstroke (1:19.95), while Lapuz also placed third in the boys’ 13-14 400m freestyle (5:24.41).

Meanwhile, SSC would like to thank Tan Holdings Co. for allowing the team to stay at Fiesta Resort & Spa Guam.

### LADY

From Page 28

in a row.

The Sixers I crushed ChaCha, 80-36.

In second place is Rollers

A, which bounced back from an opening loss with two wins on Day 2. Rollers A prevailed over the G-Stars, 80-23, and won via forfeit against Hilitai.

In Pool B, the Lil’ Sonics improved to a 2-0 record and take the lead in the group fol-

lowing their 65-41 triumph over LMA.

Hopwood nailed its first win in Pool B after a victory via forfeit against Rollers B.

In the boys’ 18-and-under division, the Sixers gained a share of the lead with Rollers

B after an 83-56 win over the Runnin’ Rebels. The Sixers and the Rollers B hold identical 2-0 marks in Pool C.

The Sonics and the defending champion G-Stars also have similar 2-0 slates after thumping the ACS Torchbear-

ers, 80-23, and Rollers C, 88-49, respectively.

Rollers A takes the lead in Pool A after slipping past the Ayuyus, 64-55, while the Ol’ Aces improved to a 1-1 record following a 48-31 win over the Junior Sonics.

### GAME

From Page 28

the second o-kon set when Pelisamen leaped for a backcourt two-point kee. He went for another backcourt kill with the ball finding the net awarding Pelisamen a goal and the series opener win for Ghasias Brothers.

Game 2 was played last night with the Fanians needing to win

to force a deciding Game 3.

Ghasias Brother failed to wrap up Game 1 early despite taking a 92-85 lead after four regular sets.

Pelisamen’s team had a jackrabbit start winning the opening set, 25-2. The second set was a neck-and-neck battle with Ghasias Brothers eking out a 26-24 win to take a 51-26 lead at halftime.

Fanians recovered in the third

set, 27-26, and prevented Ghasias Brothers from nailing a juiced-out win with a 32-15 victory in the fourth set.

In Rocball, a leading team can only win a match after four sets if it also prevails in the fourth set. If not, the game goes into overtime (o-kon) where the leading squad should win only one set to end the match. The trailing team must win two o-kon sets to

grab the victory.

In the first set o-kon, Ghasias had a chance to end the match when it led, 10-7. But Ghasias committed errors, allowing the Fanians to escape with a 10-6 triumph and bring the game into the second overtime.

Pelisamen had seen enough, as he took charge in the second o-kon to finally close Game 1 in Ghasias Brothers’ favor.

Pelisamen was the game’s

heavy hitter scoring 25 points on nine kees, two aces, and a goal.

Larry Sharry paced the Fanians with 21 markers on nine kees and a goal.

Ghasias Brothers and the Fanians set-up their title duel after downing their foes in the semifinals. Ghasias topped the Okies, 104-78, while the Fanians dethroned 2007-2008 champion Evenflow, 91-72.

pete in Auckland, New Zealand in the last week of January.

Joining tournaments in Australia and New Zealand will make the CNMI netter miss classes and he thanked MHS for allowing him to continue competing off island.

“I thanked MHS for being so supportive lately with my tennis. I hope they will continue to be supportive with my tennis career,” Heo said.

### HEO

From Page 28

the team after a runner-up finish in the 2008 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Fiji.

Heo was coming off a stint in two tournaments in the Philippines early this month, but won only a couple of games there as he was still playing hurt.

But with or without an injury,

he will keep on playing to earn ranking points.

“I hope to get more ranking points so I could get bring my ranking to a higher level. My injury still bothers me but it’s getting better. The thing about ankle injuries is that it never really goes away,” Heo said.

“It’s vulnerable and I really need to be careful so I still wear a brace when I’m playing tennis,” he added.

After playing in the Philippines, Heo took a weeklong break before resuming his preparations for the tournaments in Australia.

He is training six times a week doing upper body and core workouts every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, Heo does leg workouts such as running, sprinting, and other drills.

NBA STANDINGS				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	28	4	.875	—
New Jersey	15	16	.484	12 1/2
Philadelphia	12	18	.400	15
Toronto	12	19	.387	15 1/2
New York	11	18	.379	15 1/2
Southeast Division				
Orlando	24	7	.774	—
Atlanta	20	10	.667	3 1/2
Miami	16	13	.552	7
Charlotte	11	20	.355	13
Washington	6	23	.207	17
Central Division				
Cleveland	26	4	.867	—
Detroit	18	11	.621	7 1/2
Chicago	14	17	.452	12 1/2
Milwaukee	14	17	.452	12 1/2
Indiana	10	20	.333	16
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
San Antonio	20	10	.667	—
New Orleans	18	9	.667	1/2
Houston	20	12	.625	1
Dallas	18	12	.600	2
Memphis	10	21	.323	10 1/2
Northwest Division				
Denver	20	12	.625	—
Portland	19	12	.613	1/2
Utah	19	14	.576	1 1/2
Minnesota	6	24	.200	13
Oklahoma City	29	0	.094	17
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	25	5	.833	—
Phoenix	17	12	.586	7 1/2
Golden State	10	23	.303	16 1/2
L.A. Clippers	8	21	.276	16 1/2
Sacramento	7	24	.226	18 1/2
Yesterday's Games				
Atlanta	109,	Denver	91	
Chicago	100,	New Jersey	87	
Detroit	88,	Orlando	82	
Phoenix	110,	Oklahoma City	102	
Minnesota	108,	Memphis	98,	OT
Washington	89,	Houston	87	
Utah	112,	Philadelphia	95	
Golden State	117,	Toronto	111	
By The Associated Press				



# Christmas 8-Ball Tournament

PHOTOS by  
ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Juancho Mendoza eyes the No. 8 ball during his first round match against John Monganni in the of USS Peleliu's Christmas 8-Ball Tournament last week.



Taylor Watanabe makes his first shot against Chester Hanoi.



Simon Kapileo polishes his cue stick.



Rolly Villanueva tries to break the No. 6 and No. 7 ball during his match against Erwin Gomez.



Tournament winner Jerry Soriano in his first match against Ed Manucduc.



Nolan Cultura enjoys his match against Simon Kapileo.



John Monganni prepares to hit a stripe ball.



Erwin Gomez gets ready to break.



Ed Manucduc gets ready to break.



Chester Hanoi looks at his target during his match against Taylor Watanabe.





**Trench Tech lines up six events for 2009**  
Trench Tech promises to continue feeding the island's seemingly insatiable taste for mixed martial arts with six events lined up in 2009. **26**

# Saipan Tribune Sports

**Suns get back on track, beat Thunder**  
When his two-time MVP left the game with back spasms, Phoenix Suns coach Terry Porter ran his offense through another former MVP nearly twice the point guard's size: Shaquille O'Neal. **24**



28 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## SSC swimmers haul 26 medals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club collected 26 medals from the 2008 Guam International Swim Meet held over the weekend at the Hagatna Swimming Pool.



Grace Kimball led SSC's medal rush with her seven first place finishes.

The 13-year-old Kimball won in the 50m backstroke, 100m breaststroke, 200m freestyle, 100m backstroke, 100m freestyle, 400m freestyle, and 50m freestyle swims in the girls' 13 to 14 age group.

Kimball bested four other swimmers from Tsunami Guam, Typhoon, See SSC on Page 26

Members of the Saipan Swim Club and coach Mike Villagomez, second right, pose with their medals in front of Fiesta Resort and Spa Guam.

SAM MARTINSEN



## Game 1 goes to Ghasias Brothers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER



Ghasias Brothers drew first blood in the championship series in the 2008-2009 World Organized Rocball Community League, pulling off a double overtime win over the Fanians, 113-105, Monday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Ghasias won Game 1 of the best-of-three title series with Freddie Pelisamen scoring crucial points in the second overtime.

The game was tied at 10-all in See GAME on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Freddie Pelisamen of Ghasias Brothers serves during their semis match against the Okies in the Rocball league. Pelisamen scored 25 points to lead Ghasias to a double overtime win over the Fanians in Game 1 of their title series Monday night at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

## Lady Knights lead 2008 Holiday Hoops

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER

Action in the 2008 Annual Christmas Basketball Jam Festival resumed Monday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium with Mt. Carmel School taking the lead in the girls' 14/18-and-under division.



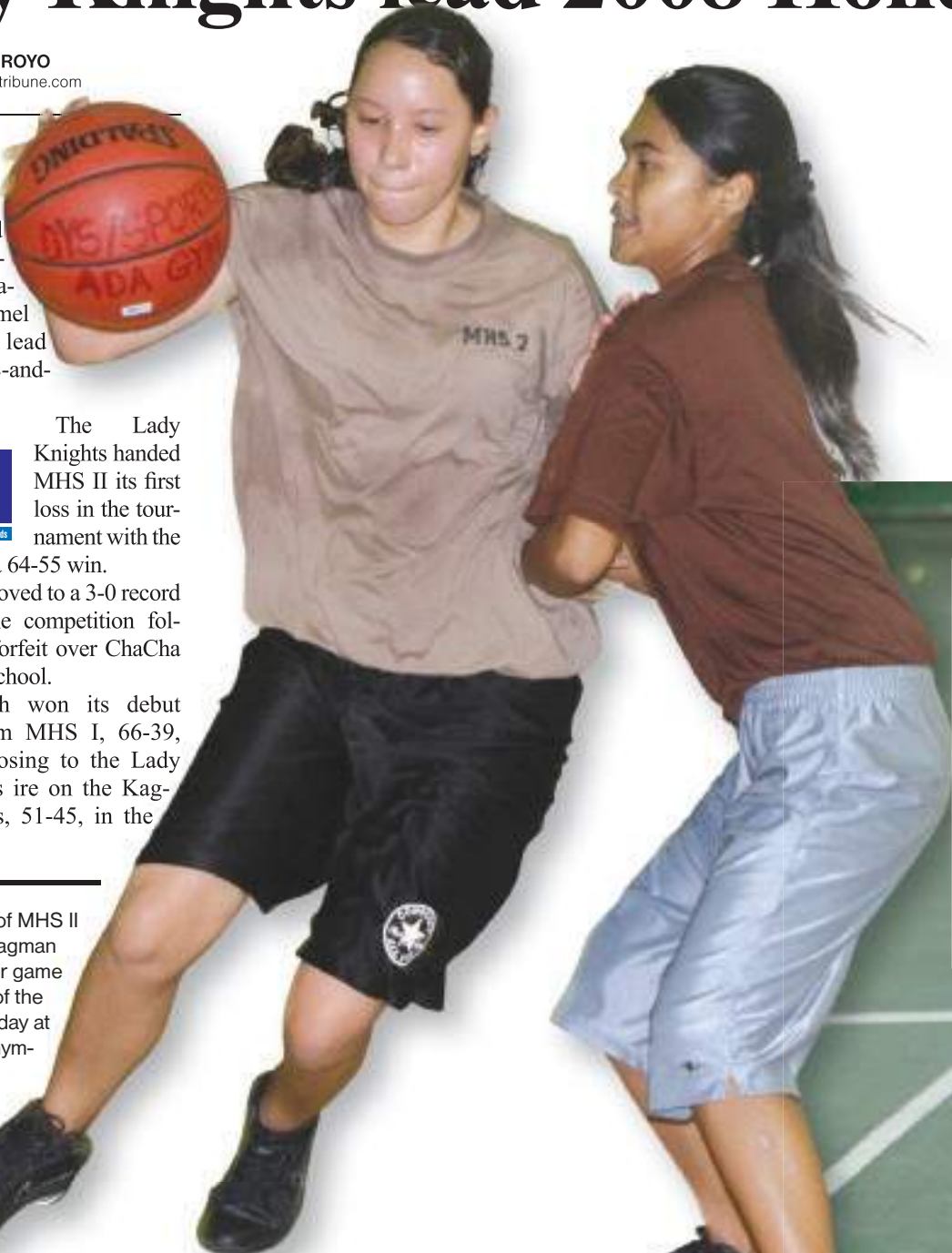
The Lady Knights handed MHS II its first loss in the tournament with the former pulling off a 64-55 win.

Mt. Carmel improved to a 3-0 record after Day 2 of the competition following a win via forfeit over ChaCha Oceanview High School.

MHS II, which won its debut against sister team MHS I, 66-39, Saturday before losing to the Lady Knights vented its ire on the Kagman Lady Ayuyus, 51-45, in the afternoon game.

Lena Guzman, left, of MHS II dribbles against a Kagman defender during their game in the girls' division of the Holiday Hoops Monday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Earlier, MHS I was awarded a win after a no-show from Chacha. The Lady Dolphins I and II hold identical 2-1 records.

In other results in the girls division, the Lady Ayuyus broke into the win column after walloping Hopwood Junior High School, 56-29.

Kagman's cagebells are in third place with a 1-2 record, while Hopwood and Chacha have similar 0-2 slates.

In the boys' 14-and-under division, the Sixers I kept the lead in Pool A after getting their third win See LADY on Page 26

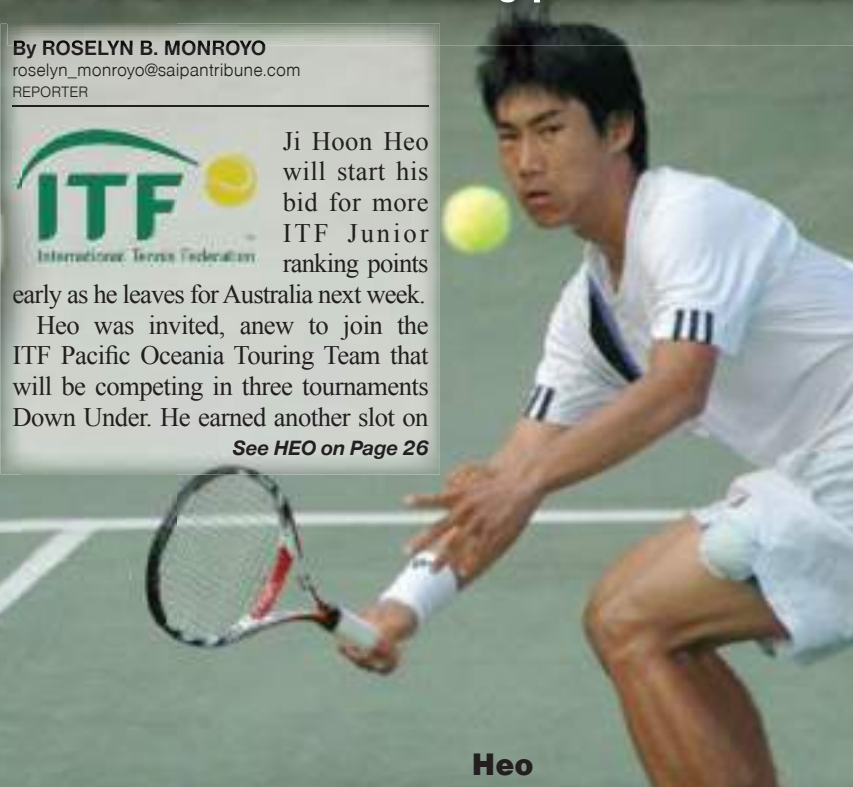
## Heo to launch bid for ranking points Down Under

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER



Ji Hoon Heo will start his bid for more ITF Junior ranking points early as he leaves for Australia next week.

Heo was invited, anew to join the ITF Pacific Oceania Touring Team that will be competing in three tournaments Down Under. He earned another slot on See HEO on Page 26



Heo